BOXING

Technical knockout

JAMES "Bonecrusher" Smith, a late substitute for Tony Tubbs, won the World Boxing Association heavyweight title early on Saturday morning with a technical knockout of Tim Witherspoon after two minutes and 12 seconds of the first round at Madison Square Garden, New York. Smith's aggressive start saw Witherspoon, who had been the clear favourite, knocked down three times after a series of hard rights. As New York State allows only three knockdowns, the fight had to be stopped.

Witherspoon seemed neither physically nor mentally prepared for fighting a big, heavy puncher like Smith and his only answr to the first powerful right that staggered him was to try to tie his opponent up inside. But Smith pushed him away and knocked him down.

Witherspoon, spitting out a bloody tooth, got up but never recovered from that first assault. His easy win on points over Smith last year seemed to have made him over-confident and unready for a very different opponent, one in much better physical and mental condition and much more self-assured after a series of wins this year.

Smith will now meet Mike Tyson, the World Boxing Council champion, in Las Vegas on March 7. As both fighters are heavy punchers, it promises to be a battle for survival. But Tyson, who was at the ringside on Saturday, will be an overwhelming favourite because of his unbeaten record and his recent one-sided win over Trevor Berbick in taking the WBC title.

Witherspoon seemed mentally worn out by his pre-fight wrangles with promoter Don King over his purse and the fact that he had not been consulted about the change of opponent after Tubbs dropped out. There were threats of court action before the matter was resolved.

These dramas completely overshadowed another world title bout. Julio Cesar Chavez retained his WBC junior lightweight title with a unanimous 12-round decision over Juan LaPorte.

CRICKET

Openers dominate Test

FOR the third Test in succession a big opening innings dominated the Australia/England match. In the first Test England went on to force Australia to follow-on and eventually won. In the second Australia avoided the follow-on and the match ended in a draw.

At Adelaide the initiative was, for a change, with the Australians after they had hit 514 for five declared after winning the toss. England, without the injured Ian Botham, responded in kind on an excellent batting strip to reach 349 for five on the third day, thus avoiding the follow-on comfortably but placing the odds on another drawn match. This was strengthened when England went on to reach 455 on the fourth day, then had Australia at 82 for three, a lead of 141.

The fifth day petered out into the expected draw with Australia declaring their second innings at 201-3 at tea, with Border batting impeccably to record his seventh Test century against England. This left England with 261 to get in only two hours. There were minor flutters when Athey was out and then Gatting was bowled first ball, but Broad and Lamb played out the remaining overs comfortably enough; England finishing at 39 for two.

There were plenty of critics of the Australian tactics after the second day, many of them home-grown. On such a comparatively tame pitch, it was said, they should have scored quicker and declared sooner to put the maximum pressure on the English. As it was they made only 207 for two on the opening day, led by a century from Boon, who thus ended a bleak spell. They should have taken more advantage of some loose bowling from the England pacemen. Drizzle cut the day slightly, but the Australian batting pace wasn't exactly compelling at other times, Marsh taking three hours and a quarter over his painstaking 43. This brought to 27 hours and 48 minutes the time he has occupied the crease against England so far in the series, during which he has scored at the rate of 16 and one half runs per hour. Boon was content, however, and Australia no doubt felt that the pace could be stepped up on the second day.

Boon had taken five hours over his 103 and Jones took almost as long over his 93, most of it scored on the second day. Border, the captain, raised the pace slightly in his 70, but the fastest man was Waugh, who hit a masterly 79 at faster than average. That, however, only raised the rate to about three an over by the time Border declared at 514 for five. Border had in the previous Test criticised the English for caution in not declaring their second innings earlier, but this time he, too, was overcome by caution, leaving only 40 minutes of the second day to try to winkle out some English wickets. They failed. Broad and Athey comfortably seeing out the day at 29 without loss.

England's initial target on the third day was to avoid the follow-on, at 315, then build patiently for the draw, leaving them still one up in the series. This they did at a fractionally faster rate than the Australians to be 349 for five at the close. Athey was the first out at 55, having shared a century opening stand with Broad. Gatting, the captain, and Broad then went on to individual centuries.

Earlier in the week Gatting had been severely reprimanded by the English management for failing to turn up in time for the opening of their game against Victoria. Gatting had overslept, much to his personal embarrassment. Gatting effectively had the last word by leading his men to victory in Victoria for the first time in 24 years, by five wickets with 17 balls left.

At one stage England had looked capable of winning in a day and a half. After dismissing Victoria for 101 in their first innings, England responding with 263. But Victoria were more stubborn in their second innings, hitting 345, of which Hibbert had 91 in six hours. England made halting progress, but they eventually reached 184 for five at a run a minute. More important, in the context of the third Test, Whitaker made up for his first innings duck by hitting 48, the leading England score and won selection in place of the injured Botham for the Test.

Discipline sadly lacking

ONE way and another it was an unlovely week in British soccer. Eleven players and a coach were ordered off during the weekend's English League matches, four in one match. This followed a taut European club match between Borussia Münchengladbach and Glasgow Rangers in midweek when Rangers had two men sent off and six men all told were booked. Leading Saturday's shenanigans were Portsmouth in the English Second Division, who had three men sent off before half-time in their match against Sheffield United.

If the English league was overburdened with sendings-off, bringing the total this season to 107, the Scottish League had some handsome scoring. Hearts led the way in the Premier Division with a 7-0 win over the bottom club, Hamilton Academicals.

Dundee United are now the only British club remaining in the three European club competitions. They reached the quarter finals of the UEFA Cup by holding Hadjuk Split to a goalless draw away, having won the home leg 2-0. They did so in spite of midfield dominance by the Yugoslavs, who were frequently thwarted by the goalkeeping brilliance of United's Thomson.

The Scots had hoped to have two clubs in the quarter finals, but in the other match Glasgow Rangers went out to Borussia Münchengladbach on the away goals rule. Rangers held the Germans away 0-0 but had drawn the home leg 1-1, that German goal away from home settling the tie. Unhappily, for all it was rich with quality football from both sides, the match was not short of fouls and vendettas, and the referee has reported both teams to UEFA.

At a lesser level there was joy in midweek for the little Welsh non-league club, Caernarfon Town, when they won their FA Cup replay at York City, of the Third Division, 2-1. But one of the other surviving non-league clubs, Chorley, saw their run ended 5-0 at Preston North End in a replay. Caernarfon's reward was to win a third round home tie against Second Division Barnsley. Perhaps the key match to emerge from the draw was a meeting between the two Manchester clubs, United and City.

One of soccer's greatest tragedies was remembered at the weekend when Bradford City reopened their Valley Parade ground 18 months after 55 people died in a fire at the old main stand. A total of £2·6 million has been spent on a 5,500-seater stand incorporating the latest safety features. An England team played Bradford to mark the opening and Sir Oliver Popplewell, who headed an inquiry into the fire, unveiled a memorial sculpture.

Alan Dunn's DIARY

Cricket championship

ENGLISH cricket will have major changes to its county championship formula in 1988. There will be for the first time six four-day matches and 16 three-day games, giving the same number of days as at present with 24 three-day games. There will also be an end to the quarter final stage of the knockout Benson and Hedges Trophy, in which the Combined Universities side will be chosen from all British universities, not just Oxford and Cambridge.

Meanwhile, Geoff Boycott, the former Yorkshire and England opening batsman, has confirmed his retirement from first-class cricket. He had been offered a two-year contract by Derbyshire, but there was objection to his playing for another county while still on the committee at his native Yorkshire.

Downhill racer

WORLD skiing lost one of its personalities for the rest of the season last week almost before the racing has begun. Bill Johnson, the American Olympic downhill champion, was taken home after shattering his left knee and breaking his right shoulder in a fall while practising for the weekend's racing at Val Gardena, Italy.

Last season another American, Kraig Sourbeer, broke his neck in training on the same section of the classic course, the notorious Camel Pass bumps. In the racing Canadians won both the men's and women's events. Rob Boyd won at Val Gardena, while Laura Graham ended a run of four successive World Cup victories for the Swiss by taking the Val d'Isère event.

Record dog

GREYHOUND racing had an extra special week when Ballyregan Bob set a world record of 32 consecutive wins. He did it before the world's television cameras at Hove, winning by nine and a quarter lengths from five other top-class greyhounds at odds of 5-1 on. He overtook the record held by an American greyhound, Joe Dump, set in 1978-79. Ballyregan's owner, Cliff Kevern, who bought him as a pup for £1,500, says that the dog will now go to stud.

Lendl's Mastery

IVAN LENDL made sure of being confirmed as the lawn tennis world champion for the second time last week by winning the Masters in New York for the fourth time. In the final he beat Boris Becker in three sets, all 6-4. It was the start of a bad week for Becker, for he was later beaten 2-6, 6-4, 6-7 by the Russian, Andrei Chesnokov, in one of the round robin matches of the Young Masters tournament in Stuttgart. But Becker went on to win the tournament, beating Sweden's Jonas Svensson 7-6, 7-6, 6-3 in the final. Two of Svensson's compatriots, Stefan Edberg and Anders Jarryd, successfully defended their Masters doubles title in London at the weekend. In the final they beat Guy Forget and Yannick Noah, of France, 6-3, 7-6, 6-3.

EEC Games

A NEW concept for a multi-sport games, designed to avoid the massive costs of putting eveything into one city, was launched in London last week. The European Economic Community Games, enbracing 24 sports in a dozen cities around the Community, are planned for 1989. The unifying feature will be television, with the anticipated cost of £6 million being met by a dozen sponsors . . . Each of the 12 games centres will stage two sports. Nine sponsors have already signalled interest.

YACHTING

NY boat eliminated

YACHTING history was made on Gage Roads on Sunday when New Zealand crossed the finishing line in her race 15 seconds ahead of the New York Yacht Club's America II. That defeat eliminated America II from the Challenger semi-finals and leaving the NYYC out of the America's Cup for the first time in the competition's 135-year history.

Britain's hopes of making the semi-finals subsided two days earlier when White Crusader lost to New Zealand and the fourth place in the semi-finals was left to be fought out between John Kolius in America II and Tom Blackaller in the St Frances Yacht Club's USA. The crunch matches came on Sunday when Blackaller faced Marc Pajot in French Kiss, and Kolius took on the Kiwis.

The wind was light and shifty, and promised unpredictability. America II led at the first mark by the simple expedient of going way out on the right wing and picking up the seabreeze first. The easterly on which the course had been set was to give way to a Sou'Sou' westerly and it was on this that Kolius came romping into the first mark, with sheets cracked, to lead by 21 seconds.

That lead grew to just over a minute and even though the breeze grew to 18 knots, America II stayed ahead around the next three legs. But, on the third beat, the superior boat speed of New Zealand began to show. She took over the lead two-thirds of the way up that leg, and was 14 seconds up as she went around the mark.

Kolius was not finished yet. He made Chris Dickson and his crew fight all the way. But a New Zealand victory was assured as Dickson concentrated on covering his opponent all the way to the line.

French Kiss led USA up the first leg, but Blackaller took his radically-designed boat to the front on the run. He gained on each leg thereafter.

The four yachts going into the Challenger semi-finals starting on December 28 are: New Zealand (Chris Dickson) representing the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, Stars and Stripes (Dennis Conner) representing the San Diego Yacht Club, USA (Tom Blackaller) representing the St Francis Yacht Club, and French Kiss (Marc Pajot) representing the Societe des Regates Rochelaise.

Football results

TODAY LEAGUE: First Division: Aston Villa 3, Manchester United 3; Luton 1, Everton 0; Manchester City 3, West Ham 1; Newcastle 3, Nottingham Forest 2; Norwich 1, Arsenal 1; QPR 0, Charlton 0; Tottenham 2, Watford 1; Wimbledon 3, Sheffield Wednesday 0. **Postponed:** Southampton v. Coventry. **Played Sunday:** Leicester City 2, Oxford Utd 0; Liverpool 3, Chelsea 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Arsenal (p19, pts38); 2, Notts Forest (p19, pts35); 3, Liverpool (p19, pts34).

Second Division: Crystal Palace 5, Hull 1; Grimsby 1, Stoke 1; Leeds 3, Brighton 1; Millwall 4, Huddersfield 0; Plymouth 1, Derby 1; Reading 1, Ipswich 4; Sheffield Utd 1, Portsmouth 0; Shrewsbury 1, Birmingham 0. **Postponed:** Blackburn v. Dundee. **Played Friday:** Bradford 1, West Bromwich 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Oldham Athletic (p18, pts37); 2, Portsmouth (p19, pts36); 3, Plymouth (p19, pts34).

Third Division: Blackpool 1, Bury 1; Bolton 3, Gillingham 0; Chesterfield 3, Carlisle 2; Fulham 1, Mansfield 1; Middlesbrough 1, Doncaster 0; Notts County 5, York 1; Rotherham 4, Bournemouth 2; Walsall 4, Darlington 2; Wigan 1, Brentford 1. **Played Sunday:** Bristol Rovers 2, Newport 2; Swindon 1, Bristol City 2; Port Vale 2, Chester 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Middlesbrough (p19, pts38); 2, Gillingham (p19, pts37); 3, Notts County (p19, pts34).

Fourth Division: Cardiff 2, Aldershot 0; Colchester 0, Preston 2; Crewe 1, Torquay 0; Exeter 1, Tranmere 0; Hartlepool 0, Wolverhampton 1; Hereford 2, Cambridge Utd 3; Lincoln 4, Swansea 0; Northampton 2, Wrexham 2; Orient 2, Burnley 0; Peterborough 2, Halifax 0; Rochdale 1, Scunthorpe 1; Southend 0, Stockport 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Northampton (p19, pts48); 2, Swansea (p19, pts35); 3, Southend (p18, pts34).

SCOTTISH FA CUP — First Round: Forres Mechanics 0, Berwick 1. **First Round Replays:** Alloa 0, Inverness Caledonian 1.

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — Premier Division: Aberdeen 1, Hibernian 0; Clydebank 1, Dundee Utd 2; Dundee 6, St Mirren 3; Hearts 7, Hamilton 0; Motherwell 1, Celtic 1; Rangers 4, Falkirk 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Celtic (p24, pts39); 2, Dundee Utd (p24, pts34); 3, Hearts (p24, pts33).

First Division: Airdrie 3, Brechin 1; Clyde 2, Queen of the South 1; Dumbarton 1, Dunfermline 2; Forfar 1, Partick 2; Kilmarnock 2, Morton 0; Montrose 2, East Fife 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Dunfermline (p24, pts33); 2, Dumbarton (p24, pts30); 3, Morton (p24, pts27).

Second Division: Ayr 1, Cowdenbeath 3; East Stirling 4, Meadowbank 4; Raith 1, St Johnstone 1; Stenhousemuir 2, Queens Park 2; Stirling 2, Arbroath 2; Stranraer 1, Albion 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Raith Rovers (p18, pts25); 2, Meadowbank (p18, pts24); 3, Stirling Albion (p18, pts22).

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Freed Sakharov hopes to resume work in Moscow

By Martin Walker in Moscow

DR ANDREI SAKHAROV, the best-known dissident still remaining in the Soviet Union, was freed from his seven years of internal exile this week, while Pravda published a blistering personal attack on the man who put him there, the former Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev. Dr Sakharov was given the news in a telephone call from the Russian leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev.

The announcement seemed to have been timed to distract world attention from the anti-Russian riots in the traditionally Muslim republic of Kazakhstan. Dr Sakharov's freedom to return to his home in Moscow, with his wife, Yelena Bonner, is also an attempt to resolve the last of the notorious human rights abuses still capable of provoking public outrage in the West.

When I asked him in a telephone interview whether there would be any restriction on his activities in Moscow he said: "When we come we shall see. We shall have to find out when we arrive how things will be."

Asked whether he would be able to see Western correspondents once in Moscow, Dr Sakharov replied: "Again, we shall have to see. We have got out of the habit of seeing people. Literally, we have not seen anyone except for the postman or people in the shops, and we have talked to no one."

His first call in Moscow would be on the Academy of Sciences, to discuss arrangements for him to resume his scientific work, he said. He plans to return to his post at the Lebedev Physics Institute.

"I intend to continue working at the institute to study and do research and perhaps to teach. While in Gorky, I had been doing some research, or rather I tried to do something. This is very important for me.

"My own health is reasonable, more or less, considering my age and recent experiences," he said, "But my wife is feeling much worse than I do. Since the beginning of December, she has not been out of the house. She has pains in her legs and some heart pain."

He confirmed that he had "a long and very interesting conversation" with the Soviet leader Mr Mikhail Gorbachev on the day after a telephone was installed in the small flat in the closed city of Gorky where he had been exiled since 1980, just after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

KGB officials arrived last week to install a telephone. It was the first time he had been allowed a private line since his arrival in Gorky.

When Mr Gorbachev rang, they discussed human rights, said Dr Sakharov, adding that he said to the Soviet leader: "I beg you to consider once again the release of all prisoners of conscience. This would be to carry out justice. It is very important for you, for the Soviet Union, for international opinion, and for the success of all your efforts."

Dr Andrei Sakharov.

Mr Gorbachev's reply was non-committal, Dr Sakharov said.

They discussed the death in prison last month of the dissident writer, Anatoly Marchenko. "His would have been the first name on my list," Dr Sakharov told Mr Gorbachev.

Dr Sakharov then said that in his view, all those convicted under those laws which forbid "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation" had been convicted and imprisoned unjustly. "I cannot agree with you," Mr Gorbachov replied.

Dr Sakharov's freedom from exile follows the permission for the dissident poet, Irini Ratushinskaya, to fly to Britain last week after four years in prison. Earlier this year, the leading Jewish human rights campaigner, Anatoly Shcharansky, and Yuri Orlov, founder of the Helsinki monitoring group, were freed from prison and allowed to go to the West.

Last month the veteran Soviet dissident, Anatoly Marchenko, died in prison, where he had spent more than 20 of his 48 years. The household names of the human rights movement are now dead, in exile in the West, or free to live and work in the Soviet Union. It remains to be seen whether the West's human rights campaigners can mobilise the same outrage for the lesser known figures who remain incarcerated, or waiting endlessly for their exit visas.

It may be significant that Dr Sakharov's freedom was announced while the Politburo's most prominent hardliner, Yegor Ligachev, was still out of the country as guest of honour at the Vientamese Communist Party congress in Hanoi.

Of perhaps equal significance was the appalled reaction in the West to the Soviet Union's celebration of UN Human Rights Day with a public warning that Dr Sakharov had got off lightly, and could have faced much more severe criminal charges. That statement by the veteran deputy chief of the supreme court, Viktor Gusev, provoked the most anti-Soviet headlines that Mr Gorbachev had seen since he took office. He is said to have been appalled at the public relations disaster it produced.

Soviet officials speaking privately claimed that Mr Gorbachev believed he was still carrying the can for decisions taken by his predecessors. They pointed to the critical article on Mr Brezhnev in Pravda as a sign of his anger.

The article, to commemorate Mr Brezhnev's 80th birthday would normally have praised his achievements. Instead it condemned Brezhnev's lack of consistent democracy his failure to encourage public criticism or to accept self-criticism.

It was by no means an apology to those like Dr Sakharov who suffered for their criticisms of the Soviet Union under Mr Brezhnev. But it was a significant statement of regret, to mark the day of Dr Sakharov's release from exile.

Gorbachev's new broom keeps on sweeping

THE release of Dr Andre Sakharov, the most famous Soviet dissident, and his equally long-suffering wife, Yelena Bonner, is a dazzling climax to a momentous week in Soviet affairs. Seen alongside the bitter denunciation of Leonid Brezhnev in Pravda, the riots in Kazakhstan and the threat to resume nuclear tests, the return of the Sakharovs to Moscow is powerful evidence of Mr Gorbachev's determination to transform the Soviet Union. When he came to power there was doubt of his determination and his ability to achieve real reform. He is now embroiled in a struggle of enormous complexity on two fronts, a fact which attests to the magnitude of his self-imposed task as well as to his energy and confidence. What is not yet clear is whether he is going to get away with it.

On the external front, he showed at Reykjavik how far he is prepared to go towards arms limitation — given American flexibility on Star Wars. His earlier, unilateral moratorium on tests gave Moscow a rare propaganda advantage in this "peace offensive". Even the threat to resume them remains contingent on a US decision to continue with theirs. At the same time such a threat may be seen as a signal, or possibly a surrender, to the military: Mr Gorbachev is not going to risk Soviet security if the Americans make no concession in response to his own. This still leaves Washington to do the explaining if Soviet tests resume. Despite the static on the East-West line since Reykjavik, to say nothing of Washington's self-absorbed descent into scandal, there are hints from US sources that the way to a major arms deal is far from closed and that pleasant surprises should not be ruled out. Perhaps Mr Reagan now needs a spectacular success in this area just as much as Mr Gorbachev — in each case to divert attention from domestic issues.

Straddling the external and internal fronts is the question of human rights. The release of dissidents shows Mr Gorbachev shedding a burden he would prefer not to have to carry into every conference chamber. It is an easier one to dump than Afghanistan, where the military again have a direct interest. And when Pravda blames the Brezhnev era for over-reaction to dissidents, their piecemeal release becomes a useful symbol of the intent to make a new start. A much riskier assault on the Brezhnev legacy is the dismissal of the late leader's last crony in the Politburo. As Mr Kunayev was also party leader (and a native son) of Kazakhstan and was replaced by a Russian national, the Kazakhs ran riot in their capital of Alma Ata, raising seldom-mentioned spectres of nationalism and Muslim revivalism. Almost as startling as the unrest is the fact that it was reported prominently by the Soviet media while it was still going on, the most remarkable demonstration so far of the new openness after Chernobyl. *(Report, page 7.)*

All this relates directly to the attack on inefficiency and bureaucracy, and on the economic backwardness which is their most glaring and enduring product. An important link between this domestic house-cleaning and the peace offensive is that if the latter succeeds, vast sums would be released to the decisive benefit of the former. If the West is looking for a test of sincerity on arms, it should consider the evidence of resolve offered by the risks Mr Gorbachev is taking at home. It would be tragic if the West's present political disarray prevented it from seizing what looks increasingly like an historic opportunity. There is no need to abandon caution, or even risk loss of face, to test Mr Gorbachov's good faith: all that is required is to meet him halfway by suspending nuclear tests. Let him have his positive signal: it is the only way to catch up with the moral lead he still holds on disarmament, now reinforced by the removal of that perennial obstacle to East-West understanding symbolised by the name of Sakharov.

The Washington Post

From Gorky to Moscow

ANDREI SAKHAROV and his wife, Yelena Bonner, have become symbols of individual resistance to Soviet repression, and their return from internal exile to Moscow is cause for rejoicing. Dr. Sakharov was never accused of, let alone tried for, any crime. His wife was set up for exercising rights guaranteed by Soviet law. They were treated in what was, even by Soviet standards, a dirty way: to convince outsiders that they were doing all right, for instance, the government invaded their communications and Dr. Sakharov's medical sessions. But they were not doing all right: at the best of times, they were undergoing terrible harassment and privation. Yet they were never broken. They maintained their dignity and also an extraordinary relationship with each other.

It was thuggishness and a characteristic lack of political imagination that led Leonid Brezhnev to exile the Sakharovs — to get the "problem" of this renowned physicist and his wife, herself a human rights leader, off his back. Plainly, he did not expect that from a remote closed city these two ailing people could stir protracted worldwide concern. They had help from family members and other admirers. They also profited from a certain leakiness of the Soviet system, which was evident even before Mikhail Gorbachev introduced selected bits of "openness." Mr. Gorbachev is now cutting the Soviet Union's substantial international losses by bringing the couple back to Moscow, where the next chapter will unfold.

The losses are more than international. Foreigners see Andrei Sakharov as an individual dissident. Soviet leaders may see him more as a representative of a whole class of scientists and educated people whose taste for an eased-up political environment must somehow be accommodated if the state is to get full value from their productive talents. Dr. Sakharov was never thrown out of the Academy of Sciences. Scientists may be no braver than others, but the best of them recognize they have some leverage in dealing with the state on cautious liberalization and contacts with the West. Foreign trade and espionage offer the Kremlin certain alternatives to relying on Soviet scientists. But Mr. Gorbachev seeks to get as much as possible out of native talent, and this cannot be done by treating accomplished people like criminals.

The Sakharovs have suffered but also benefited from their celebrity. The lives of many other courageous Soviets play out beyond the light and reach of Western concern. It is well to recall that the Soviet system loses none of its capacity for arbitrariness for the occasional well-publicized grant of relief.

Dissident poet freed, page 10

Reaganism's strange logic . . .

If current reports of the growing scandal in Washington are correct, the logic of the calculation that underlies the fiasco is inescapable: in the minds of North, Poindexter and the other culprits, three or four living American ex-hostages are worth thousands of dead Iraqis plus thousands of dead Nicaraguans.

What kind of barter is this that exchanges the lives of a handful of Americans for weapons of death that will surely be used to destroy tens of thousands of non-Americans? If these bizarre, macabre deals were inspired by a "humane impulse" then God save humanity.

What is most astonishing is that, amid all the glamour and recrimination, Reagan, Buchanan and friends continue to believe that they are themselves misunderstood arbiters of peace and freedom to the non-American world, as is evident when they extol the virtues of Colonel North as a new "American hero".

Such arrogance underpins the American black-and-white view of the world, a world that to them exists for American use, in which the Pacific is "America's Pond", Latin America is the "strategic underbelly" of the States, and Central America is their "backyard". It is this set of values that makes the United States now so unpredictable and incomprehensible.

The sooner Reagan, his baloney and his cronies bite the dust in true cowboy-fashion, the sooner this collective national concert will be deflated down toward a more realistic scale of values. No amount of scandal will turn America into a benign force on the planet; let us hope, however, that "Irangate" will lead a lessening of the macho flexing of America's military-industrial muscles, which might make that crazy country a fraction less malignant, even if only for 5 or 10 years, until the next Nixon or Reagan gets to rule the American Empire. The only consolation is that the next set of lunatics will be bound, after some time, to fall foul, as they step even beyond their own warped mentality — we will then be treated to another spectacle on the scale of this current, amazing imbroglio.

M. Poldane,
Bondi,
Sydney.

Alex Brummer overstepped the bounds of his generally admirable circumspection (Dec. 7) by trying to equate Reagan's Iranian imbroglio with past presidential traumas, as all arising out of an abiding American belief in something called "democracy". Are we to attribute selling sophisticated weapons to a fanatical and warring theocracy, and financing a war against a tiny country whose government has a claim to popular support equal to or greater than most of those aided by US foreign policy, all of which was carried out beyond the gaze of the elected representatives of the American people themselves, simply to an over-eager attempt to achieve "moral goals", guided by "the love of democracy"?

We've got to separate the simple-minded pronouncements of grandpa Reagan and his pitchmen from the perverse worldview which motivates their actions. Their manichean vision of "democracy" vs "communism" does not flow from any genuine desire to extend liberty to every corner of the globe, but is rather a cynical justification for protecting what they take to be American interests by backing repression (Chile, South Africa) and subverting popular reform (Nicaragua).

It's those interests that lead the Norths and Poindexters and Regans to consciously undermine the foundations of the "City on a Hill".

Michael Solot,
Dept. of Geography,
Univ. of Wisconsin.

Bar 500

In your report (Dec. 21) of the death of Anatoly Marchenko in Chistopol labour camp in the USSR, Martin Walker states that Marchenko was one of the last well-known inmates of the Soviet prison camp system.

Amnesty International has detailed case histories of more than 600 prisoners of conscience in the USSR, seven of whom are imprisoned in Chistopol. Anatoly Marchenko is the second political dissident to die in that camp in the past three months, and many of the prisoners known to us are suffering from serious illness. Irina Ratushinskaya, the poetess released the day before the Reykjavik summit, was completely unknown outside human rights circles 18 months ago. The challenge facing us is to ensure that all prisoners of conscience receive publicity, and accelerate the pressure for their release.

Janet Johnstone,
Amnesty International,
London EC1.

Teetering on the Sellafield brink

Once again the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate has let British Nuclear Fuels off the hook (Guardian Weekly, Dec. 21).

In 1981 it investigated the way the Windscale/Sellafield plant was run, its report was scathing about management and safety procedures. In 1983 it was the same story, and now we hear it once again. This time, however, the inspectorate has at least begun to talk of closure, even if it is only temporary.

However, what the inspectorate should have demanded is that the Sellafield reprocessing plant be shut permanently. Greenpeace has insisted on this not merely as a response to sloppy management practice or an appalling safety record, but because there is no need for reprocessing to take place.

Last year Greenpeace through its consultants, Large and Associates, submitted evidence to the Commons select committee on the environment, when it was considering the problems of nuclear waste. This showed that there was no need to reprocess spent fuel and that it could be dry-stored instead.

Lord Marshall, chairman of the Central Electricity Generating Board, said on television at the time of the committee's report that he would prove us wrong. We are still waiting, as is the select committee.

Nor have we heard from the CEGB about our challenge that it substantiate the assertion that our four-year nuclear close-down programme is impracticable.

This, of course, leaves the question of why BNF continues to see its future in reprocessing. The answer is, the money received from West Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Spain and Japan, all of whom are delighted to send their spent fuel to our country for reprocessing.

Ask BNF how much low-level, intermediate, or high-level waste it has returned to these countries, and the answer will be none. It has either been dumped in the sea, buried at Drigg, or is stored awaiting further treatment and the answer to the problems of disposal.

Public opposition to this situation is growing; sooner or later the Government will have to realise that the British people are more concerned about their environment than about scrabbling for every yen.

George Pritchard,
Greenpeace,
London N1.

How the PM seems to be talking herself out of a job

I am sure I'm not alone in finding Mrs Thatcher's use of the adjective "party-political" as a term of gentle or not so gentle abuse surprising. She is, after all, a party politician.

The burden of her message in her ITN interview with Peter Sissons (Dec. 9) was that matters like defence and law and order were in some way deeper than party politics and more important than them. This is indeed strange, because politics and, since the early 18th century, party politics has been the major method by which policy has been arrived at in our democracy.

It is true that there is almost total consensus that we should be defended and that there should be law and order, but this does not for a minute mean that there is consensus about how these things can be achieved. Conflicts about the means by which social goals can be actualised can only be resolved politically, and therefore those matters cannot be above, beyond, or deeper than party politics.

It is interesting that the French word *politique* means policy, thus perhaps preventing a distinction without a difference.

What is the Prime Minister talking about? Does she intend, rather than pricing herself out of a job, to *talk* herself out of one?

Ian Griffiths,
Killarney Road,
London SW18.

Mrs Thatcher's declared faith in the integrity of President Reagan is hardly surprising in view of her record of faith in the integrity of her own appointees before and after they have proved completely unworthy of it.

Eric A. Rose,
London W5.

Don't let Reykjavik initiative slip by

The US's European allies are uncomfortable that Reagan and Gorbachev nearly agreed, at Reykjavik, to remove all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe. The Europeans are mistaken — they should be glad to see them go, as a first step in removing all nuclear weapons from Europe. It will be a shame if this initiative gets lost in the furore about Iran.

The missiles are seen as a way of linking the US to the defence of Europe. As Russia's ability to attack the US grew in the 1970's, European leaders feared that the US would not respond to a Soviet invasion of Europe with its US-based nuclear arms, out of concern for our own population.

The installation in Europe of US Pershing and Cruise missiles, which Europe requested, eased European fears. It would be difficult to avoid using these weapons if Europe were attacked; and their range is such that they would fall directly on Russia. So Russia could hardly fail to respond, attacking the US directly.

There was also an element of wishful thinking. The Europeans found the thought of nuclear war involving Europe, Russia, and the US so unthinkable that they wrongly concluded that this made it unlikely. They want to make it plain that nuclear weapons will be used early, and that the war will involve both Russia and the US, thus linking our fate to theirs and keeping war as unthinkable as possible.

There are seemingly respectable arguments for this posture. The Europeans do not want the US to contemplate a limited nuclear war in Europe. Also, they argue, nuclear weapons will be used sooner or later during any European war, and will involve both the US and Russia. Thus it ought to be clear that they will be used early, and widely, removing any lingering doubts a potential aggressor might have. If the world cannot be made safe for conventional war, it is better if we do not pretend that it can be.

This view is mistaken, since the presence of nuclear weapons is itself conducive to conflict. The weapons are so destructive that there is a big advantage to using them promptly. Thus, in any crisis, there will have to be a delegation of authority to field commanders, and the weapons will quickly pass out of civilian control. A minor incident, a sort of a shoving match between Russian and Allied forces, could thus ignite a conflagration.

Richard Lynn,
Millwood, NY.

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Ankara's backward glance

Turkey is now to be President of the Council of Europe and can be seen holding elections of various kinds; reportage of that country has therefore sometimes given the impression that conditions have "normalised" there: an impression that is partly true. Nevertheless, it is still easy for people to be gaoled on charges that would be inconceivable in most democratic countries.

Halil Berktay is a Turkish historian doing a doctorate at Birmingham University, who is active in Ankara in trying to set up a Socialist Party, for ding nothing more than participate in a public meeting to this end, he, with others, has been arrested and will be tried under Turkey's catch-all Article 142, which regards such activities as tantamount to stirring insurrection.

We have come to know Halil very well as a fellow historian and friend. He is not only of considerable standing intellectually, but a very generous-minded individual whom any institution such as ours should be glad to receive as a member. Why should a country that proclaims its refound commitment to the democratic process feel the need to give the impression to the world that it is still a repressive semi-military regime.

Chris Wickham,
Rodney Hilton,
Department of Medieval History,
University of Birmingham.

Buttering up the roaches

A. Wood (Letters, Dec. 7) proposes a buttered jar as solution to the cockroach problem. My own ship, serving in the Mediterranean, was thickly infested. Unable to stay long enough in port for delousing, we introduced North African spiders on board. These speedily ate all the cockroaches but multiplied fast. After two weeks the spiders put the ship out of action by webbing down the guns. At my suggestion chameleons were flown in. These effectively ate the spiders, allowing the guns to be freed. Chameleons proved excellent fried on toast with a knob of butter. Either way, (Mr Wood's or mine) butter is essential and cockroaches ultimately edible after processing described.

Graham Binns,
London NW3.

Number of jobless declining

CHRISTMAS brought with it the cheering prospect that unemployment may, at long last, be declining. The dole queue has now shortened for four consecutive months — the first time this has happened since Mrs Thatcher took office in 1979 — which encouraged Whitehall to claim that the trend was now "firmly downwards."

The number out of work in November fell by 29,387 to a total of 3.2 million. Even after allowing for seasonal factors, it now looks as if the total really has declined by about 77,000 since the middle of the year. One reason is that the growth in the labour force is slowing down. Another is that special employment measures, which do not necessarily result in real, permanent jobs, are also taking more people out of the dole queue.

Even if the trend at the moment is downward, there is no guarantee that it will continue that way. Redundancies in manufacturing industry continue with depressing regularity — British Telecom alone is planning to shed 24,000 jobs over the next four years — and more will inevitably be lost as a result of the Government's decision to buy the American Awacs airborne early warning system in preference to the home-grown Nimrod.

This decision ran into furious objections which were not confined to the parliamentary Opposition, but Ministers contrived to avoid a Commons debate on the subject by delaying the announcement until the House was about to adjourn for the Christmas recess.

By opting for the attractive Boeing offer — to spend £130 in Britain for every £100 it earns from the sale of Awacs — the Government may, however, actually be contravening its own rules. Boeing has confirmed that, under the US Export Administration Act, any contracts placed in Britain would be under control of the US Department of Commerce. But the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, ruled three years ago that this piece of American legislation is an infringement of British sovereignty and that British firms should not accept contracts governed by it.

The pre-Christmas warning by the Bank of England about the dangers inherent in the growth of easy personal credit was echoed by the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which said that Britain's money supply was expanding far too rapidly and that spending overruns now posed "major problems" for the next budget. The organisation predicted that the budget would offer little scope for the kind of tax cuts Mrs Thatcher has been promising since 1979 and which are widely expected in this next, pre-election budget.

The Treasury can, of course, still pull in money from the sale of state assets such as British Airways and the nation's water undertakings. It will not, however, earn anything from the sale of Rolls-Royce, which is to be put up for sale in the spring. On the contrary it — or, rather, the taxpayers — will be writing off more than £600 million.

The flotation of the company is expected to bring in between £500 million and £750 million. Before it can be floated, however, the Government will plough money into the company by replacing its existing bank debts of £273 million with an equal amount in new shares. This is in addition to losses of £372 million written off a year ago. This will leave ministers open to accusations of selling the world's best-known engineering company for nothing. A consolation, if such it be, is that foreign investors will not be allowed to own more than 15 per cent of it.

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN
by James Lewis

The Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, took an unprecedented step when he allowed a convicted murderer who is serving two life sentences to be released into police custody for a day to search on a bleak, windswept Pennine moorland for the possible graves of two young people who disappeared more than 20 years ago

The release was that of Myra Hindley who, in 1965, was convicted with her lover, Ian Brady, of the horrific murders of three young people, two of whom were found buried on Saddleworth Moor, in Greater Manchester. Two other youngsters went missing at the same time and the police have decided, for some inexplicable reason, to start searching for their burial places on the moor.

Hindley's costly visit to the scene of her crimes, involving a helicopter flight, the blocking of roads and a massive armed security cordon, provoked considerable controversy. What, it was asked, could be gained by the search? Could Hindley and Brady, already jointly serving five life sentences from which they will never be released, possibly be put on trial again after such a lapse of time?

The deputy chief constable of Greater Manchester, Mr John Stalker, was not even aware that Hindley was to be brought to help in the search because his chief, Mr James Anderton, had not told him. He had, it seemed, been frozen out by his boss ever since he returned to work three months after being suspended on flimsy charges which were proved to be without foundation.

His suspension was viewed with great suspicion because he was, at the same time, taken off an inquiry into allegations that the police in Northern Ireland were operating a "shoot-to-kill" policy against republican terrorists in the troubled province. His findings, had they ever been completed, would have recommended the prosecution of a number of senior Northern Ireland officers.

After 30 distinguished years of police service, Mr Stalker decided last week to quit. He gave, as his reason, the intolerable pressures brought on himself and his family as a result of his suspension. Privately, he had lost faith in a service which brought spurious charges against him, shunned him when they failed to stick, and left him with bills for more than £20,000 spent on his needless defence.

The vulnerability of the Dublin Prime Minister, Dr Garret FitzGerald, and the tenuous nature of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, were demonstrated when the Irish Parliament passed, by only one vote, a Bill allowing suspected terrorists to be extradited for trial in the North

A greater readiness by both sides to extradite terrorist suspects was an integral part of the Anglo-Irish pact and Dr FitzGerald was determined to honour this undertaking. But Ireland has been traditionally uneasy about placing its prisoners before the British courts and the Dail managed to amend the new extradition law in such a way that it will not take effect for years — by which time, it was evidently hoped, either Dublin, or Westminster, or even both, might have new governments.

COMMENT

Insiders inside the DTI

MR PAUL CHANNON, Secretary for Industry, has acted with commendable speed to investigate allegations that civil servants within his own department have been using privileged information about companies to secure financial gain. The trouble is that this is the sixth time with a few weeks that the Government has acted with commendable speed to attack irregularities in the City. If investigations continue at this pace then the points scored by Mr Channon for prompt action will be obscured by the wider political flak as the worst fears of popular mythology about the City appear to be confirmed. The reason for the new investigation has not been confirmed by the Department of Industry, but it comes a week after press speculation that leaks from the DTI may have prompted dealings in shares of IC Gas in advance of a surprise DTI announcement that the Monopolies Commission would investigate the £750 million takeover bid from Gulf Resources.

The allegations are particularly serious for two reasons. First, they involved people who are supposed to be monitoring the City in the wake of the so-called Big Bang: this swept away regulations which had hitherto kept the City on a fairly tight rein, thereby leaving it exposed to more worldwide competition, more conflicts of interest and, inevitably, more temptation. Britain prides itself on having a Civil Service rarely tainted with corruption. Unless civil servants are not only free of double dealing, but seen to be free, then the City will take its cue accordingly. If gold rusts, what shall iron do?

Second, allegations of insider trading by civil servants were triggered by what happened only a week earlier, at a time when the purge (and the publicity) against irregularities was at its height. One of the main reasons for the speedy use of the DTI's increased powers (including the ability to force suspects to speak out under pain of contempt of court) was to generate the regulators' own Big Bang — a blunt warning to the City that the party was now over and that recalcitrants would be pursued ruthlessly. But if this message did not have the desired effect on some of the DTI's own monitors let alone the City traders, then the depth of the problem to be solved can be only guessed at.

There is another reason why the Government is acting so speedily. It is to head off demands for a statutory body like the Securities and Exchange Commission in the US to replace the present system based on voluntary self-regulation with a statutory reminder that the existence of a statutory body is, of itself, no guarantee against rotten apples within. If the DTI could harbour them, so could a British SEC. But the present proliferation of ad hoc investigations will have an uphill task to prove itself against the counter attractions of an SEC body with accumulated expertise and wide ranging powers to follow up leads. However, the debate about the relative merits of statutory versus voluntary regulation is a long-term one. The Government's main aim is damage limitation in the run up to a general election when scandal in the City could cost valuable votes.

MI5 book trial ends in welter of accusations

By Richard Norton-Taylor in Sydney

THE MI5 secrets trial in Australia ended last Friday, but Mr Justice Powell is not expected to give his judgment on whether Mr Peter Wright can publish his memoirs until the middle of February.

It has become increasingly clear that Whitehall is concerned about the exposure of two particularly damaging episodes: the alleged plot by 30 MI5 officers to destabilise the 1974/6 Wilson government, and the investigations of Soviet penetration at the top of the security service.

The evidence, the judge said on Friday, showed that Sir Robert would not stoop to lie when a half-truth would do. He suggested that the Cabinet Secretary had used what he called the old soldier's camouflage trick of giving a misleading impression and intending to do so.

Mr Justice Powell told the court in his final intervention: "My real complaint is that enough issues were thrown up well in advance to indicate to the authorities in Britain there would be a lot of questions to be answered." These answers, if they were going to be satisfactory, needed to be given by "someone in authority."

The impression he got from first reading Sir Robert's affidavits had totally changed as a result of later evidence, he said. "He is an official, not a technician able to give hard, detailed, compelling evidence. That's my objection to Sir Robert.

The judge intervened after Mr Theo Simos QC, for the Government — who throughout the trial has adopted a low key approach — had delivered a brief but savage attack on Mr Malcolm Turnbull, the lawyer acting for Mr Peter Wright, the former MI5 officer whose memoirs the Government is trying to suppress.

Mr Turnbull's criticisms of Sir Robert and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, said Mr Simos, were "extravagant, melodramatic, and outrageous. They were baseless, unjustified, and should be rejected out of hand," he said.

Mr Turnbull, earlier this week accused Sir Michael and the Government in general of having used Sir Robert as a "fall guy" to "lie and dissemble" to the court.

Grants cut

By Nicholas de Jongh

ARTS Council subsidies to the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre have been frozen at existing cash levels for the first time. Next year, the RSC will get £5,107,000 and the NT £,811,400 — the same as in 1986.

The new cash allocations announced last week, in effect, amount to a cut of about 6.5 per cent in real terms. The South Bank Board which funds concert halls by the Thames will suffer the same standstill treatment in 1987.

The Arts Council decision, taken on the advice of its drama panel, will plunge the RSC, which has an accumulated £800,000 deficit after a poor year at the box office, into immediate difficulty. Its new chief executive, Mr Terry Hands, described the allocation as "a curiously aggressive action. I do not understand it," he said.

His first reaction was that the company would have to cut one of its main productions at the Barbican Theatre next year and one at the Pit. It would also have to try to reduce the size of the company.

OBITUARIES

Sir Harry Platt

SIR HARRY PLATT, one of the founding fathers of modern orthopaedic surgery, has died at his home in Manchester at the age of 100. He devoted his life to the cure and treatment of fractures and bone disabilities, which he had suffered himself as a child.

He was inspired to study medicine by the surgeon Sir Robert Jones, who straightened his knee. Sir Harry founded Britain's first separate fracture clinic in Ancoats in Manchester in 1914, and headed Manchester University's orthopaedics department when it was set up in 1932.

Under his leadership both clinic and department were unrivalled in Britain and he became the country's first professor of orthopaedic surgery when a chair was created for him at Manchester in 1939. He was president of the Royal College of Surgeons from 1954 to 1957 and played a major part in the organisation of the National Health Service.

His own disability, which gave him a pronounced limp, prevented Sir Harry from taking much exercise, to which he attributed his long life. An accomplished musician and composer, he came from a long-established Lancashire textile family.

Bill Simpson — Dr Finlay

BILL SIMPSON, the Scottish actor who for 12 years played Dr Finlay in Dr Finlay's Casebook on BBC radio and television, has died, aged 54.

Dr Finlay followed. It was to keep him busy on BBC TV for nine years and on BBC Radio for another three.

Mr Simpson toured frequently, including two years in Educating Rita playing the ageing lecturer who in the film was played by Michael Caine. He was in pantomime during most Christmas seasons.

Mr Simpson had a home in Spain and went there to rest after he became seriously ill. He was there when he was again taken ill.

Mr Simpson was twice married. Both marriages ended in divorce. He had two children by his second marriage to the actress Tracy Reed, step-daughter of the film director Sir Carol Reed.

David Penhaligon, MP

THE Liberal MP for Truro, Cornwall, Mr David Penhaligon, was killed on Monday, when a van skidded on black ice and crashed into his Rover car on a steep hill near his constituency.

Police said that conditions at the scene were so bad that officers could not stand up.

The out-of-control van went on to hit a bus and then burst into flames.

The 42-year-old MP was the Liberal treasury spokesman, and one of his party's best known and best-liked members.

A former president of the party he sported a broad Cornish accent and was one of three politicians who stood in to host the BBC Radio 2 Jimmy Young programme when JY was on holiday last month.

His majority at the last election was 10,480.

The pinkoes who help to people Paranoia Gulch

WITH the Government's Australian ordeal over for the present, I recall a conversation I had shortly after the election in October 1974. I went to see a respected politician, who had been prominent in the Heath cabinet and now faced a lengthy exile from power. What were his plans? Would he stay in front-line politics, or perhaps retire to lusher pastures?

He replied with unexpected ferocity. He certainly intended to remain in politics, and for a simple reason. He felt it his patriotic duty to nullify, and as soon as possible defeat, the Labour Government of Harold Wilson. This was because it was peopled by traitors.

Furthermore, he could name them. During his time in government he had seen their security files. On the basis of these he could say with certainty that Mrs Barbara Castle, Mr Michael Foot, Mr Tony Benn and Mr Denis Healey were "Muscovites." The most suspect of all was Healey. "Perhaps," he said with relish, "we will wake up one morning and find that Denis Healey is in a pool of blood on the pavement."

My informant was a reasonable man. He survived the Labour years to become a prince among wets under Mrs Thatcher. He would never contemplate saying a fraction of this in public. No Tebbit he: far too civilised, and scornful of almost everything the Tory Right represents.

But what he does share with them is a partially paranoid mind. Admitted to the deeps of this teeming organism, I was reminded that even in the Gentlemen's Tendency, the Labour Party is regarded as something much more ominous than a political opponent. And when, having recounted this episode in another place in 1977, I ran into the gentleman in question at a party conference, he volunteered with grinning jubilation: "I still believe it. I still believe it."

This glimpse into an unshakeable faith has its modern continuities. At the same time as a departed minister was filled with these apprehensions, a cabal of MI5 officers, including Mr Peter Wright, was, according to Wright himself, preparing to act on similar fears in a series of unauthorised operations against the Labour prime minister.

There was common feeling, if not provably common cause, between Conservative politicians and security officials of the Wright persuasion. Indeed, a detail of my own encounter which has remained with me is that it coincided with the visit to my informant's house of a shadowy figure, leaving as I arrived, who was casually described to me as "the chap who kept me informed on these things when I was in government."

Labour's questionable allegiance was a theme pursued by Mrs Thatcher throughout her time in Opposition, and it united all wings of her party. On a Panorama programme in July 1977, she all but asserted that Labour was indistinguishable from the Communist Party, and said that Prime Minister Callaghan, while not perhaps a Trotskyist himself, was surrounded by Trotskyists he could not control.

The echoes of this reach into 1986. Indeed, they are getting louder. The prime minister's attacks on Mr Kinnock now resound with intimations not of error but of treachery. A streak of venomous hatred, not manufactured for parliamentary show, enters her every reply to any question that has any bearing on defence and security.

If you press the average Tory to explain this, he will come up with one or two plausible bits of evidence going rather beyond Arthur Scargill's one-time liking for holidays in Bulgaria. Plainly there are militants in the Labour Party who long for the overthrow of capitalism, and devote their lives to the unpromising objective of a British revolution. There always have been such dreamers, and now they have a foothold in a few inner-city branches and councils.

It might also be said that the Labour Party tends to see the Soviet Union in a less menacing

By Hugo Young

light than the Conservative Party. It is not so disposed as the Tories to assume that Moscow is poised for the attack. In its coarser variant, this feeling is accompanied by a gut anti-Americanism which is usually as blind as it is dumb. Plenty of material here to titillate the excited imagination of a Tory Commie-spotter.

Again, images of the East European socialist state have rolled easily off the tongue, especially in 1979, as a description of what Labour's economic policy would lead to. Perhaps this is mere political slanging. But it helps reinforce the impression that if you scrape the skin of British socialism you will find an arm of the Comintern: sometimes witting, sometimes unwitting, but Muscovite all the time.

This, soberly and fiercely, is what my 1974 informant believed, and doubtless still believes. It is, in fact, a calumny so gross as to make one wonder about his sanity and that of the legions of Conservatives who think as he does, not excluding the present prime minister. The fact that this was a leader's opinion of Healey, Castle, Foot and Benn tells one a lot more about the psyche of Conservatism than the politics of socialism.

What such a judgment says is that the Labour Party fundamentally lacks legitimacy. British socialism, we are to understand is not simply a creed that doesn't work. It is actually an alien force: its policies East German, its allegiance Russian, its leaders the dupes or manipulators of this misbegotten connection. When Mrs Thatcher speaks of needing a third term to destroy socialism, those are the well-springs of her passion.

Now it is true enough that British socialism has lost its way. It teeters uneasily between obeisances to Marx, to Crosland, to Tawney. If you took some of its ideas to their logical conclusion, you might indeed end up in East Berlin: but this overlooks the fact that logical conclusions are what the Labour leadership is at greatest pains to disavow.

That leadership is not very different from the leadership of socialist parties elsewhere in Europe. Yet nowhere else is a challenge made to the very right of a "socialist" party to exist. Nowhere are questions asked about its patriotic reliability. Only in Britain does the governing party contend that its main rival ought, in a well-ordered world, to be wiped off the board as a foreign excrescence.

Given the odious intolerance of a handful of local authority bosses, you might say that the Tories have a point. Brent and Haringey councils look like being a vote-losing embarrassment for Labour. But in their major claim, breathtaking in its arrogance, the Tories go a substantial way towards repudiating the values of democratic politics.

There could be no graver charge against a security service than that it acted to destabilise its own government. Yet this is what a participant in the operation against Wilson now apparently confesses. He thinks he was doing the country a favour. It is a deeply scandalous prima facie revelation. If any event of the recent past requires a judicial inquiry, there could not be a more obvious candidate.

But the present government appears not to be interested. It puts up a junior minister to try to blow the thing away with one feeble puff.

At the bottom of the government's indifference, however, lies this other factor. Harold Wilson, as Roy Jenkins aptly said, carried light ideological baggage. So does Mr Kinnock. But inside the most unexpected Conservatives, an MI5 file-keeper is struggling to be heard. For them, all socialists are walking in the wrong direction.

A COUNTRY DIARY

INVERNESS: Two months ago a local naturalist brought me a small mammal to identify as he could not work out which species he had obtained. It had been brought in by a cat that had been hunting along the shore line of Loch Ness. The blunt nose indicated it was a vole but the specimen was too large to have been a bank vole or field vole and in any case its tail was too long. However, the tail was far too short to have been a brown rat and the ears and muzzle were also too short. So by a process of elimination it could only be a water vole. However, this was no ordinary water vole as it was completely black rather than the more usual brown colour. This black form — some people claim it to be a distinct subspecies, *Arvicola terrestris reta* — is only occasionally found in Britain and generally in the north of Scotland. To be fair to the naturalist who brought the specimen for me it is unusual to see a black form and the size aspect was not readily apparent as it was immature.

The distribution maps of the water vole indicate that the location where this particular vole was found is at the extreme northern edge of its known range, although it is suspected to occur even further north and west. Although I have not seen a live water vole in the Highlands I have occasionally found them as prey items in golden eagle eyries and these have always been the black form. This is another indication of the wide range of food that golden eagles will take. Other predators on the water voles included stoat, mink and pike. Water voles are therefore uncommon throughout the Highlands and do not seem to occur at all in the Inner or Outer Hebrides. So most people I spoke to had never seen a water vole let alone a black one and there was considerable interest in the specimen.

So much interest in fact that I decided to have the specimen mounted. The end result is a very attractive and interesting mount with the animal on a small log and sitting upright in the feeding position with its tail curled over the log. The small front feet each grasp a small piece of soft rush. For interpretating Highland wildlife at shows and lectures — including schools — it has already proven invaluable.

Ray Collier

RAF 'would prefer fewer Awacs to risking Nimrod'

THE RAF is prepared to buy fewer American Awacs than it needs, pay more for them, and wait until 1991 to get the first one, rather than risk being left with a British Nimrod radar aircraft that is still inadequate.

This was the essence of the explanatory statement which the Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger, made to the House of Commons on Thursday last week when he confirmed the Government's decision to scrap the GEC Nimrod after nine years' work and purchase a fleet of Boeing Awacs instead.

Mr Younger said it was a sad decision. Everyone's instincts would be to buy British if we could. But he was sure it was right. It was based on unanimous advice, scientific, military and civilian, that the risk of assuming that GEC could get the Nimrod radar working properly in three years — as the company said it could — was too big.

The Defence Secretary acknowleded that the issue could not be absolutely resolved. It was a question of whose engineering judgment one accepted — GEC's or the ministry's. He also admitted that the British avionics firm was prepared to back its own judgment by paying half Nimrod's remaining development bill of £660 million. That £330 million share would only have been repaid by the Government if the 11 Nimrods had been delivered on time to the required specification.

But GEC could not carry the military risk of failure, which would leave the RAF without any airborne early warning aircraft in the early 1990s, and it was this, Mr Younger said, which forced him to play safe by buying an American system that would definitely work.

The Defence Ministry is therefore cancelling all its Nimrod contracts with GEC immediately, and placing an £860 million order for six Boeing E-3 Awacs aircraft instead, for delivery from 1991. A fleet of six aircraft is not enough to mount the four airborne early warning patrols the RAF wants; it will only manage three of them, to a lower standard than required.

But Boeing has given the ministry the option to purchase a further two aircraft at the same price — £95 million each — within six months, and Mr Younger says he will consider whether these can be afforded when he has had a chance to assess next year's long-term budget costings.

The full cost of meeting the air staff's original requirement (ASR 400) will therefore be £1,050 million, rather than £660 million (plus the £930 million already spent on Nimrod) — a difference of nearly £400 million, not the £200 million mentioned somewhat confusingly in the Commons statement.

The minister said at his press conference later that he had al-

By David Fairhall

ready conveyed his decision to the French defence minister, Mr Andre Giraud. He thought it likely that the French air force would now follow the RAF in buying American, and although this would be a separate order with Boeing he hoped that there would be some savings in the lower unit costs of support and maintenance items.

The RAF has not been offered any US Air Force Awacs aircraft on loan to bridge the gap between now and 1991. This will continue to be filled as best it can by obsolete propeller-driven Shackletons with radars using second world war technology — one of the reasons the RAF was not inclined to take a chance on Nimrod.

However, the RAF will be exploring the possibility of sharing the training facilities already established in West Germany for the existing Nato fleet of Awacs.

This last point implies that the £860 million contract with Boeing does not include all training support items, although many of these have been acquired for Nimrod. But the figure does include allowance for penalties now payable to GEC.

The Defence Secretary said he could not take the risk of the RAF's programme not being achieved.

As for lessons to be learned, the minister said his department was not trying to evade its share of responsibility. "Our experience with Nimrod has reminded us of the importance of establishing agreed contractual terms at the earliest possible stage," he told MPs.

News that the Boeing system had been sanctioned by the Cabinet marginally pushed up the shares of Plessey, Racal and Ferranti, the three principal British partners in the Awacs consortium.

GEC's share price remained down at about 6p over their 160p low for the year. In six months the group has had its market value knocked down by about £1.7 billion to just under £4.4 billion.

GEC, headed by Lord Weinstock, is expected by City watchers to increase its write-off costs on Nimrod from £15 million so far to £25 million at the end of the current trading year. Although analysts expect GEC as a whole to weather the storm, the outlook for GEC Avionics, where up to 1,500 jobs are expected to be lost, is bleak.

Deal infringement of sovereignty

By Paul Brown

THE contract offered by Boeing to place offset work in Britain as part of a deal to supply its Awacs radar system would be an infringement of sovereignty.

Boeing confirmed that under the US Export Administration Act 1985 any British company accepting a contract from them would have its business placed under the control of the US Department of Commerce. Under US law the department must licence and control all movement, manufacture, and sales of US technology in Britain.

Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General ruled three years ago that this US act is an infringement of UK sovereignty and must not be accepted by British companies.

Last June the Government, in an unpublished note of protest, told the US government to stop intervention in British companies under this act. The occasion for that protest was a raid by CIA agents on a Leeds company to discover what had happened to US computer parts.

Atomic test cancer claims can be heard

A FORMER lance corporal with the Royal Engineers last week won a High Court victory that could give him and hundreds of other ex-servicemen the right to sue the Government over cancers allegedly contracted after they witnessed the British atomic and hydrogen bomb tests on Christmas Island in the late 1950s.

In a ruling that will be seen as a potential erosion of the Crown's immunity from legal action, Mr Justice Caulfield held that the Ministry of Defence could not rely on immunity as a complete defence to a damages claim by a blood cancer victim, Mr Melvyn Bruce Pearce.

But the Crown was granted leave to appeal to the House of Lords and Mr Pearce, aged 49, of Backwell, Bristol, will have to wait until the case is finally decided by the Law Lords before knowing whether he can go ahead with his action against the Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger and Ministry of Defence.

The Government announced two weeks ago that the controversial Section 10 of the 1947 Crown Proceedings Act, which has barred members of the Armed Forces from bringing legal actions against the Crown, was to be repealed. But the change will not help Mr Pearce and others seeking to sue over the past injuries because it will not be retrospective.

But after last week's ruling, Mr Mark Mildred, Mr Pearce's solicitor said that repeal of Section 10 gave Mr Pearce an added argument that it would be unfair to penalise him because his illness related to an incident 30 years ago.

Mr Pearce claims that, at the time of the bomb tests, he was owed a duty of care, not by his Army employers, but by the now-defunct Atomic Energy Authority. The Authority was not a Crown body, but its military functions came under the control of the Ministry of Defence in 1973.

In his judgment, Mr Justice Caulfield ruled that the authority's rights, liabilities and obligations in its military operations were transferred directly to the Defence Secretary and not to the Crown itself.

The judge rejected the ministry's argument that the Secretary of State was "the crown itself" rather than an officer of the Crown and therefore could not be sued.

Mr Pearce claims that on Christmas Island, he worked on a refrigeration unit used in connection with atomic tests and saw nuclear explosions.

His illness started in 1966 and a severe skin condition developed in 1970.



"Oh heck — it's my husband! I'd installed the Nimrod system but the Ministry of Defence were right — he's got through undetected."

'Insider dealing' scandal spreads to DTI

ALLEGATIONS that government officials who vet City takeover bids have been involved in illegal share dealings are to be investigated by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The inquiry announced by the Trade and Industry Secretary, Mr Paul Channon, represents a dramatic widening of the insider dealing scandals already rocking the City. But it came too late for MPs to tackle the Government on how far the scandal reached.

The inquiry will centre on civil servants within the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), as well as those who work for the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and the Office of Fair Trading — which are responsible for approving company takeover bids. But its brief also allows it to question MPs, government ministers, and outside advisers.

It is thought to have been sparked off by an unexpected fall in the share price of IC Gas two weeks ago, ahead of a surprise announcement that a £750 million bid for the company was to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Neither the company nor the stock market was aware of the decision until it was announced by the DTI the following day:

The IC Gas incident is not the only time when share prices have moved suddenly ahead of a bid reference. The inquiry is likely to focus on a series of other cases as

By Mary Brasier and Peter Rodgers

well, possibly including Monopolies Commission clearance of a link between P & O and European Ferries.

The Government has already cracked down in recent weeks on suspicious share dealings in the City. DTI inquiries are going on into the affairs of the brewing group Guinness and Consolidated Gold Fields. And a stockbroker, Mr Geoffrey Collier, has been charged with insider dealing.

The DTI said that the latest inquiry would be carried out by Mr John Lindsay QC, and Mr Peter Crozier, a former head of the Inland Revenue inquiry branch, after allegations that public servants may have misused information.

Labour's trade and industry secretary, Mr Robin Cook, MP, said that the suspicions "provided dramatic support for Labour's demand that law and order in the City should be put in the hands of a public inspectorate.

"For the past month ministers have been promising us firm action to stamp out insider dealing, and it turns out that during that period government staff may have been cashing in on the act," he said.

Share price sensitive information is handled by a number of sections within the DTI, from the policy division to the press office. "Only people who need to see information have access to it," said a DTI spokesman. He added that the existing arrangements for vetting takeover bids would continue.

The DTI had a complaint from the merchant bankers, Morgan Grenfell, about the price movement in IC Gas shares the night before the Monopolies reference was announced. Morgan Grenfell was acting for IC Gas in its fight against the bid from Gulf Resources.

Mr Richard Tolkien of Morgan Grenfell said: "We did call the DTI to express concern when we saw the sharp fall in the share price after the market closed, and we weren't given any indication."

Mr Tolkien said that during the evening of Tuesday, December 9, there was a sharp price fall of 10p to 540p and a further fall the next morning, before the announcement was made. After the announcement the price crashed to 488p before recovering to 528p.

He said Morgan knew nothing about the proposed reference and, as far as he knew, neither did the other side. "The first either side knew was at 8.55am on the Wednesday, when both were phoned and told."

Mr Ewen Gilmour, of the merchant bankers Charterhouse representing Gulf Resources, said he had also noticed the price drop the night before the announcement and had not complained. "We said 'God, does that mean we are going to be referred'?"

THE WEEK

FIVE HUNDRED days after announcing its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests, a Soviet Government statement last week announced that it would resume testing next year, immediately after the first American nuclear test of 1987.

This represents a dramatic setback to one of the boldest strokes of Mr Gorbachev's foreign policy. "The Soviet Union cannot endlessly show a one-sided restraint in a situation which is causing serious damage to Soviet security," the statement said.

It laid the entire blame on the American Government. The Soviet Union stressed that it was ready to stop its own renewed testing programme "on any day, in any month," if the Americans would reconsider.

THE US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, is "very likely" to meet Mr Oliver Tambo next month if the president of the African National Congress visits the US, an Administration official said this week.

The official noted that Mr Tambo has not followed through in the past with plans to visit Washington,

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POLICE and troops have been rushed to several new areas of Karachi, after fresh outbreaks of trouble. Curfew was imposed on the Jatlines area after a mob of 500 attacked a police station where youths arrested for setting up street barricades were being held.

MR Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, a Spanish-born guerrilla leader who fought in the Cuban revolution and spent 21 years in gaol after falling foul of President Fidel Castro, arrived in Madrid this week after being freed. He met his daughter Elena, aged 24, for the first time and was cheered by a crowd of Cuban exiles, including two other former guerrilla commanders.

A TROUBLED homecoming awaited the released American prisoner, Eugene Hasenfus, as he flew home this week, pardoned by his Nicaraguan captors so that he could be interrogated by congressional committees. Despite President Reagan's emotional support for the contras, there was no invitation for Mr Hasenfus to appear at the White House, although a presidential welcome has become routine for former hostages.

MORE than 80 civilians were killed at the weekend in an Iraqi air raid on Iran's western city of Bakhtaran. Tehran threatened to retaliate within 24 hours with long-range artillery fire on Iraqi military and industrial areas.

INTENSE lobbying is going on in Islamabad after the weekend's cabinet resignation as former ministers, members of the provincial and national assemblies and other hopefuls try to stake claims for themselves in the new cabinet.

Key portfolios in a skeleton cabinet are to be allocated later this week.

GREECE and Turkey are trading noisy protests over a border incident in the Evros river areas in which one Greek and two Turkish soldiers were killed, but neither side has openly threatened retaliation. Although last Friday's shooting was described by European diplomats as the "most serious recent incident" between the quarrelling Nato allies, they noted that both governments seemed anxious to avoid further skirmishes.

THE French Government acted swiftly at the weekend to stop any more terrorist trials collapsing because of defections by nervous jurors. In future, such cases will be heard by judges only. Mr Albin Chalandon, the Justice Minister, put forward an amendment to make a September law on terrorist trials retroactive.

This means that Mr Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, alleged leader of the terrorist group, Armed Revolutionary Lebanese Factions, will face trial without jurors on charges of involvement in the murder of two diplomats in Paris in 1982.

Students on the march in Shanghai

By Jasper Becker in Shanghai

THOUSANDS of chanting students demanding greater freedom and democracy held China's largest city, Shanghai, in their grip on Sunday night after a third day of protests, the biggest demonstrations to hit the country since the end of the Cultural Revolution 10 years ago.

Vowing to continue marches and demonstrations, the protesters, estimated to number between 20,000 and 30,000 at one point, were for the most part good-humoured, although there were reports of sporadic violence. In one incident, reported by the official New China News Agency, 31 policemen were beaten up, and there were at least seven arrests, while the protesters alleged assaults by police.

Early on Monday morning, in sub-zero temperatures, groups of students were maintaining an all-night vigil in the huge, open spaces of Shanghai's People's Park, half an hour's walk from the City Hall which was earlier besieged by protesters.

Still ringing in their ears was the exhortation from one student leader, Dai Junyi, from a local medical college. "All of you should open your eyes. We are being suppressed. The Chinese people will not be slaves."

The Government has reacted cautiously to the daring challenge to its authority, which has grown out of a series of smaller protests held since the beginning of the month in Hefei, Whan, Kunming, Shandong, Shenzhen and other cities.

The demonstrations across China are linked to the December 9 anniversary of the 1936 anti-Japanese student protests, which was also marked by demonstrations in Peking a year ago. The subsequent clampdown in Peking is thought to have led students in the provinces to take up the banner. This year the protests have focused on the election of representatives to local people's assemblies.

The movement began in earnest in Shanghai a week earlier when police intervened to prevent Chinese and foreigners dancing together at a concert given by the US pop group Jan and Dean. Despite attempts by Shanghai's mayor to calm the students, the protests have grown.

The students tabled four demands during their meeting with the mayor — recognition of the legality of the movement, a promise of no reprisals, a free press and free elections.

But in a dawn raid on Saturday, students claimed that police broke up an all-night vigil, arresting 500 students before later releasing 300. The students are now demanding an investigation into police brutality and the release of all the arrested students.

Long, honourable tradition of protest

By Michael Simmons

THE STUDENTS of Shanghai who climbed over their college walls last weekend to get out on the streets and demonstrate may have had a variety of motives, from the desire for democracy to a complaint about official disapproval of a recent rock concert.

But they take their place — and most of them know it very well — in a long and honourable tradition of student protest in modern China which is applauded, though rather nervously, by the Communist leadership itself.

The last great upsurge of youthful criticism, in the Democracy Movement of 1979-80, worked to the advantage of Mr Deng Xiaoping and his fellow-reformers by attacking the transitional post-Mao leadership which he was manoeuvring to replace. Indeed, *Mr Deng helped to stir it up*, until the movement became too "democratic" and its leaders were imprisoned.

The latest movement, which can be traced back to the anti-Japanese student demonstrations of last autumn and winter (also, some believe, officially encouraged), is less theoretical and more diverse. So far, it has produced no dissident journals of the kind sold six years ago from Democracy Wall in Peking.

Chinese students today are more individualistic and define the future mainly in terms of opportunities for jobs, travel and personal freedom.

Only toddlers at the height of the Cultural Revolution, most of them no longer share that sense of collective destiny which still sustained the demonstrators against the Gang of Four in the great Tiananmen Square demonstration in Peking in 1976, and the activists of the Democracy Movement.

But they are as quick as any group in the past to seize the chance to protest against official heavy-handedness, often in a tone of drama-filled hyperbole.

The chance which the students in Hefei, capital of central Anhui province, first seized two weeks ago, is offered by the argument now going on within the central party leadership over the desirability of political reform, and how far it should go. There is a wide divide, only partly masked in the public press, between those who seek real structural reform (perhaps even building in a degree of official opposition to the present system of government) and the more conservative leaders who simply wish to clean out corruption and make the system function more efficiently.

The Hefei students adopted a slogan first coined by the Democracy Movement activist, Wei Jingsheng, who was sentenced in 1979 to 15 years in gaol. "No democracy, no modernisation," they wrote on their banners as they marched to the Anhui provincial government offices, and called for the right to select the representatives chosen in their name by the party for the provincial people's congress.

Mr Deng Xiaoping is really interested in the four economic modernisations — industry, agriculture, science and technology, and defence. But he and his group, nudged forward by more radical advisers, may have to accept now that democracy is the indispensable "fifth modernisation."

There is an odd echo from the experience of Mao Tse-tung which led during the 1960s in a very different direction. When new economic policies had failed to produce Socialist plenty and the Great Leap Forward collapsed, Mao launched the Culture Revolution as a political solution to China's problems.

Rejecting that solution, Deng Xiaoping thought at first that the economic modernisation of China was a sufficient goal in itself. But more recently he has discovered that — as the Chairman liked to say — politics still takes first place.

Yet the models for action on which the Anhui and Shanghai students now base their protest no longer have much to do with Democracy Wall or the Red Guard rallies. With same-day satellite coverage available on Chinese television, they will have watched the recent student demonstrations in Paris and will have heard reports of anti-Moscow riots in Kazakhstan.

If they are motivated by an -ism, it has more to do with nation or nationality than with a particular political theory. Last year's anti-Japanese demonstrations struck a popular chord. So, in the non-Chinese Uighur in Xinjiang (not many miles from Alma-Ata where the Soviet Muslims have been protesting), did the demonstrations last year against the Chinese nuclear programme.

All of these themes may merge in Shanghai, where the students on the streets are joined by unemployed youth — including many who have returned illegally from the border regions — and where a second wave of penetration by foreign business and tourism arouses as much envy as admiration.

From the May 1919 movement, which launched the modern Chinese revolution, onwards, every student movement has always sooner or later been suppressed. But it is equally true that every new political stage has been launched by a student demonstration. Those on vigil last night in the People's Park have certainly learned that in their history books.

Changes at the top in Vietnam

By Nicholas Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

VIETNAM'S sixth Communist Party congress last week elected a noted economic reformer, Mr Nguyen Van Linh, as its general secretary in a step that marks the end of an era in Vietnamese politics.

Mr Linh's appointment followed the resignation of the previous party leader, Mr Troung Chinh, and his two top colleagues, the Prime Minister, Mr Pham Van Dong, and the party organiser, Mr Le Duc Tho, breaking the grip on power of Vietnam's first generation of Communist leaders.

Their departure, along with three other Politburo members, including the Defence Minister, Mr Van Tien Dung, opens the way, if not for a Chinese-style lurch into modernisation, at least a period of transition towards more pragmatic political and economic management.

Using the rhetoric of recent debate and self-criticism, Mr Linh told departing delegates that the congress marked a turning point in the process of "renovating the leadership in the political, organisational and ideological fields."

The political report approved by what the Communist Party daily newspaper Nhan Dan hailed as a "congress of determination, wisdom, renovation and creativeness" also makes clear that the overhauling of the party will now be pursued in the middle ranks to sweep away unqualified old-timers and to purge the corrupt.

The most important survivor of the Politburo is the 74-year-old Interior Minister, Mr Pham Hung, who moved up one rung to second place in the new line-up.

What is striking about the 14-man Politburo just elected is the weighty presence of southerners or those who served in the south, who have been closely associated with the pioneering efforts at a more pragmatic, decentralised system of economic management.

In addition to Mr Linh, they include Mr Vo Chi Cong, who was head of the Committee for Socialist Transformation in Ho Chi Minh City and in June was promoted to vice-premier for economic affairs in place of the outgoing Politburo members Mr To Huu, and who now seems well-placed for the premiership.

Another is Mr Vo Ban Kiet, who once served under Mr Linh in Ho Chin Minh City before being made chairman of the state planning commission and who proved a staunch advocate of reform. A third is Mr Mai Chi Tho, younger brother of Le Duc Tho, also a former Ho Chi Minh City mayor and a new entrant to the Politburo at this congress.

The ascendancy of those backing economic reform is not expected to translate into any early shift in Vietnam's policies on Kampuchea, clearly seen by Hanoi as subordinate to the pressing problems of the economy.

Vietnam feels under pressure to demonstrate flexibility in the search for a settlement of the eight-year conflict since Mr Mikhail Gorbachev's Vladivostock initiative diplomats in Hanoi say.

During a visit to Hanoi for the congress, the Kremlin's chief ideologist, Mr Yegor Ligachev, spoke of the beneficial effects to be derived from a normalisation of ties between China and Vietnam, but also referred to "the fair and reasonable policy of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea" towards solving regional problems.

Spiked wine is the salt of the earth

By Martin Wainwright

A BIT of lateral thinking by a snowplough manufacturer in the Alps has found a possible — and nationally useful — way of disposing of Austria's embarrassing lake of contaminated wine.

Millions of gallons, impounded last year after the revelation that they had been spiked with an antifreeze additive to make them smoother, may now be sprayed on to the country's icy roads.

Mr Toni Kahlbacher, who makes snow-clearing equipment in Kitzbuhel in the Tyrol, thought of the solution while reading about government difficulties in getting rid of the confiscated plonk. Instead of dismissing it as poisonous wine, he argued to the Ministry of Public Works, why not think of it as flavoured antifreeze?

"It sounded crazy at first but now we're convinced that it is an extremely interesting development," said Mr Hannes Drossler of the Ministry.

Although possession of the spiked wine is illegal, Mr Kahlbacher got hold of 3,000 litres, carried out experiments and then offered the ministry a prototype spray. The mixture proved to have merits which could help to compensate Austria for the crippling of its wine industry.

Apart from its melting power at low temperatures — minus 28 Centigrade compared with minus six for salt alone — the spray appears to be much less environmentally harmful than salt on its own. It dilutes the corrosive effect of the salt on trees and verges and reduces contamination of the water table.

Laboratory tests are now to be followed by experimental use on selected roads, to the delight of the Government, which had no idea what to do with its vats of impounded wine.

Scores of bankrupt vinters and dealers who were imprisoned for up to 10 years for fraud may find it small consolation but their product may also help the Austrian balance of payments.

The risk of the wine's bouquet exhilarating Austria's drivers to dangerous levels on icy nights is not thought to be high, although the spray will be tested in confined streets as well as country roads.

Moscow rushes troops to riot city

By Martin Walker in Moscow

AUTHORITIES in the Soviet central Asian republic of Kazakhstan, scene of nationalist-inspired riots last week, were accused at the weekend of complacency and ordered to make sharp improvements in the quality of local services.

An extraordinary meeting of the Kazakh government heard that there were serious shortcomings in the republic's housing, trade, and medical services, crop production was below target and consumer goods were in short supply.

Mr Mikhail Solomentsev, a member of the ruling Politburo in Moscow who was sent to the republic after the riots, and Kazakhstan's new Communist Party leader, Mr Gennady Kolbin, both addressed the meeting, the official news agency Tass said.

According to unofficial reports reaching here from the provincial capital, Alma-Ata, at least seven policemen and 13 demonstrators were killed in the riots. The demonstrators, said to number more than 10,000, marched on the Communist Party headquarters on the Wednesday night, broke into the building at three points, and ransacked some offices.

The official Soviet media have said that the disturbances were violent but reported no deaths.

According to reports reaching Western correspondents, 70,000 troops have been rushed to the area, none of them from local Kazakh regiments. Troops with armoured cars occupied the university where the trouble began on Friday night.

Sources here claim that 15 planes left the Soviet capital for Alma-Ata last week, carrying a host of party investigators, and administrative staff who will take over the running of the local Kazkh party.

The riots began after the veteran Kazakh party leader, Mr Dinmukhamed Kunayev, was replaced by Mr Kolbin, a Russian, in a party coup that had been ordered from Moscow.

Anti-Russian sentiments among the predominantly Kazakh students began the demonstrations. The inability, or perhaps the reluctance, of local Kazakh party officials to cool the situation allowed it to escalate into widespread anti-Russian riots.

According to usually reliable Muscovites with relatives in Alma-Ata, the rioters were able to break into two prisons and free the inmates. Russians in the streets were attacked on sight, stabbed and clubbed.

The riots seem to have been made worse by local food shortages. Tass reported that one food store was burned down, but many others are said to have been looted.

Significantly, Mr Solomentsev's first statement after reaching Alma-Ata was to insist on restoring relations between town and country, which seems to confirm that supplies had not been reaching the city.

He also called for "a greater sense of internationalism and stronger ties with institutes of higher learning in other republics", which seems to confirm the troubles began at the University. Although only one-third of the population of Alma-Ata is Kazakh, the local Russian students prefer to study in Moscow and Leningrad.

As a result, the university contains a disproportionately high percentage of Kazakhs, who can study in their local language.

A West German newspaper, meanwhile, reported that the Soviet Union will let "many thousands" of people emigrate starting on January 1 under new regulations concerning applications for exit visas and family reunions. The mass-circulation newspaper, Bild, quoting unidentified sources in Moscow, said that the Soviet leader, Mr Gorbachev, has ordered that exit applications be handled "generously and justly".

Behind the trouble in Kazakhstan

IN the course of a 40-minute TV news programme, Mikhail Gorbachev's prestige suffered two severe blows before a nightly audience of 150 million of his people. The announcement of the end of the 17-month unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests — an initiative to which he had been personally committed — dented his foreign policy.

Minutes later, the unprecedented announcement of the riots in the southern republic of Kazakhstan amounted to a direct personal challenge not only to Moscow's rule, but also to Gorbachev himself. Gennady Kolbin, the Russian who was this week imposed as the new leader of the Kazakh Community Party to replace Brezhnev's old crony, Dinmukhamed Kunayev, was Gorbachev's man.

The initial Russian reaction was of surprise that "nationalistic elements" should be able to incite such riots in what is largely a Russian city. The vast region of Kazakhstan, which stretches from the Caspain to the Urals, contains some 15 million people.

The six million Russians slightly outnumber the native Kazakhs, and the rest of the population is a complex mix of Ukrainians, ethnic Germans, Uzbeks, Tartars, Koreans and representatives of the rest of the vast multi-national Soviet empire.

In the 1950s, when Brezhnev was First Secretary, some 300,000 Russian "volunteers" were brought in to till the unfarmed steppes under the ambitious virgin lands scheme. Although it proved a limited agricultural success, and an ecological disaster, it helped to populate the land — and to reinforce Russian control.

Brezhnev's lieutenant in that process was Kunayev, who was finally retired last week from the post he had held for over 20 years as First Secretary of Kazakhstan. Under him, a vast network of official corruption developed — and so did Kazakh nationalism, spurred by the increasing Russian settlement, and by the tenacity of the Islamic religion.

So Kunayev's replacement by Kolbin, who had experience of anti-corruption campaigns in Georgia in the 1970s, was asking for trouble. With the riots, they got it.

But what happened to the usually ruthless Soviet method of maintaining public order? There is speculation in Moscow that local party officials, fearing the inevitable Kolbin purge, did little to stop the initial student demonstrations and may even have encouraged them.

The real concern will be to establish to what extent Kazakh nationalism merged into Moscow's nightmare of an Islamic revival. The Islamic religion is officially permitted on much the same terms as the Russian Orthodox Church. So long as it support Soviet foreign policy and makes the right noises about peace, and does not get involved in domestic policies, the mosques remain open and the mullahs are allowed to make their pilgrimages to Mecca.

But in recent years, there has been growing evidence of an underground and militant Islam of itinerant mullahs and Koran study groups. Radio Tehran broadcasts the Ayatollah's sermons from just across the border, and the war in Afghanistan gives the Islamic issues a personal and frightening dimension to every Muslim conscript.

Last month, Mr Gorbachev stopped off on the way to India to lecture party officials in the neighbouring republic of Uzbekistan, to condemn those who went to the mosques and to demand "an uncompromising struggle against all manifestations of religious phenomena". That was followed by Soviet press reports of draft evasion in Uzbekistan.

What is significant about this is that Uzbekistan has already gone through the purge of party ranks which Kazakhstan now fears. The fact that the purge took place without unrest in Uzbekistan, where Islam seemed much more powerful and the Russian settlers far less prominent, doubtless convinced Mr Gorbachev and his supporters that they would meet little opposition to last week's party coup in Kazakhstan.

They proved, quite dramatically, to be mistaken. It was a mistake that bodes ill for Mr Gorbachev's hopes of encouraging cautious liberalisation and more freedom of expression for the Soviet people.

Sen. Dole tells Reagan to 'clean the air'

By Alex Brummer and Michael White in Washington

WITH President Reagan and Vice-President George Bush under heavy fire this week for failing to come to grips with the Iran-contra scandal, Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, the senior Republican on Capitol Hill, led a chorus of voices calling on the Administration to "clean the air" so that the US Government can function again.

Among the immediate steps urged was the appointment of a replacement for the CIA director, Mr William Casey, who is recovering from a brain tumour operation, and a new White House supremo to take charge of its dealings with Congress and investigators looking into the Iran-contra connection.

Senator Dole, who has come from the back of the Republican pack to displace Vice-President Bush as the favourite for the presidential nomination in 1988, said: "There's still a lot of confusion out there, still a feeling he has to do something bold himself to clear the air." President Reagan's image as a strong leader has not been enhanced by apparent suggestions by the Attorney General, Mr Edwin Meese, that the President may have been under sedation after his colon cancer operation in July, 1985, when he authorised an arms shipment to Iran.

The frustrated President, whose critical faculties are now being openly questioned in the newspaper columns, told Senator Dole in a recent meeting that "people like, but they don't believe in me."

The loss of credibility suffered by President Reagan and the Vice-President was recognised by Mr Bush at the weekend. He told correspondents aboard Air Force Two that he recognises he is "no longer frontrunner" in the race for the 1988 Republican nomination. But he forcefully rejected the notion that his reputation and that of President Reagan will continue to suffer as "complete nonsense."

Nevertheless, the President's reluctance to go before the American people with what he now knows and the confusing series of leaks has changed the Presidential politics of 1988.

In addition to Senator Dole's surge to the front of the Republican field, Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia said he would make up his mind whether to run for the Democratic nomination "in the next two or three weeks." And Senator Gary Hart, the Democratic frontrunner, weighed into the debate with a wide ranging attack on the mess in the White House foreign policy-making.

The difficulties facing the White House were demonstrated again with further disclosures about US diplomatic moves in the Iran-Iraq war. The Washington Post reported that the State Department had begun sending peace signals to Iran via Switzerland in late November and early December — in the wake of the exposure of the US-Iran arms connection.

At the same time, there were suggestions that in addition to supplying intelligence data to Iraq, Iran's opponent in the Gulf war, the US has also provided quantities of arms in exchange for Soviet military equipment, including helicopters. This indicates a far closer relationship with Baghdad than previously revealed, adding to the questions which will have to be raised by Congressional investigators.

The White House announced last week that President Reagan will return to Bethesda naval hospital for minor surgery for an enlarged prostate which has given him discomfort in recent weeks. He will enter the hospital in Maryland for three or four days after cutting short his New Year's break in California on January 4.

In a calculated effort to dampen predictable speculation about the 75-year-old President's health in the worst crisis of his administration, White House spokesman Mr Larry Speakes said the occasion of the "non-urgent" transurethral resection would also be used to do the President's 18-month routine check on his colon.

In full pursuit of the Contragate affair, the White House press corps did not raise any possibility that the President's medical problems might, in any way, trigger his resignation — an event without precedent in the history of the presidency. Mr Speakes called his boss "just a superman."

The other superman, Colonel North, is the subject of new revelations. The day the Irangate affair broke, Colonel North burst into a colleague's office and claimed to have ordered relatives of high Iranian officials to be kidnapped and held in crates throughout Europe, presumably including Britain, where the ubiquitous colonel's links have this week already compromised the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, Mr Terry Waite.

The idea, the Los Angeles Times reported, was that they, and not arms, could be traded for America's hostages. So shocked was the colleague, Mr David Major, a National Security Council specialist in counter-terrorism, that he repeated Colonel North's highly convincing account to colleagues before concluding it was yet another of the fantasies now being alleged against the central figure in the scandal.

Mr Speakes said, for the record: "The NSC has no such plans or anything like that to kidnap people and lock 'em in cages all over Europe."

Clampdown on press 'radicals'

By David Beresford in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA published an extraordinary defence of its clampdown on the press at the weekend, blaming "radicals" and "revolutionaries" in the media for most of its present woes.

In half-page advertisements published in Sunday newspapers — headed "the facts in true perspective" — the Government conceded that the six-month state of emergency had still not defused what it described as a "revolutionary climate" in South Africa.

"Under current circumstances there would be a quick return to violence and unrest if the state of emergency were now to be lifted," it said. Describing the conflict in the country as "primarily a struggle of perceptions, not of conventional arms", it protested that "most of the media" — despite the emergency — had continued to promote the cause of the "radicals" rather than the "moderates".

Expressing "respect" for what it calls "the *bona fide* inclination of the media to adopt critical attitudes towards the government of the day", the advertisement added: "However, there can at the same time be no doubt that there are individuals within the established media and organs of the alternative media who strongly believe that the media should be overtly and covertly used to promote the objectives of the radical revolution."

Insisting that the struggle in South Africa was between "moderates and radicals", the advertisement concluded by advising the media to "decide which side they are on. In so doing they should bear in mind that were the radicals ever to win, freedom of the press would be the first victim. It would disappear totally and permanently."

The Government's defence of the draconian new Press Laws follows the issue of new orders by the country's police chief at the weekend, further tightening restrictions on what the Government described as organs of the "alternative media". The new orders — served by plainclothes police on the Sowetan, City Press, and the Weekly Mail — prohibits them from publishing any report, pamphlet, comment or advertisement or any other news in connection with campaigns for a "Christmas against the Emergency."

Meanwhile, as predicted, the national strike by workers at South Africa's biggest chain store, OK Bazaars, is developing into one of the more bitter industrial disputes in recent labour history here. The strike is spreading fast and the union involved — the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union — claims that riot police are being deployed at all outlets.

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This story was written under South Africa's state of emergency which imposes severe reporting restrictions.

Lebanon in throes of 'war of starvation'

By David Hirst in Beirut

NATURALLY enough, where Lebanon is concerned, it is the "war of the camps" which captures the attention of the outside world.

But for the bulk of this country's three million cynical inhabitants — for almost everyone, that is, except the Shi'ite and Palestinian combatants, the campdwellers and the Christian villagers of Maghdousheh — it is just another round in a perpetual conflict whose protagonists and localities may be forever changing, but whose forms do not.

It is not their concern because, happily, it is not this time, their region, their city quarter, their street, or, ultimate egoism, just their house that is under assault. The only war that concerns all Lebanese is the one which they call the "war of starvation". It has stolen up on them as suddenly as it threatens to be devastating. In the minds of most people it is literally that: a deliberate, systematic attempt by the warlords to win, by other means, a struggle which, after 11½ years, they have failed to win with their ever-growing arsenals. The warlords all but admit as much.

Last month, Mr Camille Chamoun, the elder statesman of the Christian community, blamed the other side and, in particular, the Prime Minister, Mr Rashid Karami, because of his continued boycott of President Amin Gemayel and the political and constitutional dialogue "even though that meant starving the Lebanese". If it was a question of which side said "ach" first, Mr Chamoun said, then it would not be the Christians. "We shall be steadfast to the end."

Meanwhile the main yardstick of *economic calamity, the national* currency, is beginning its second nosedive of the year. For the first nine years of the civil war, the Lebanese lira had held remarkably steady, at four of five lira to the dollar. But now, every time the political situation deteriorates, it takes a new tumble.

From July to November, during a period of revived hopes for a political settlement, it held at 45 to the dollar. Then, in three disastrous weeks, it touched an all-time low of 70 to the dollar. The currency dealers may, some of them, be a party to a sinister political conspiracy, but such dark theories are not necessary to explain what happens.

The Lebanese currency market is so narrow that it is extremely vulnerable to manipulation for profit. A mere £35,000, injected or withdrawn, can raise or lower the rate of exchange by one lira. The dealers have at their disposal Lebanon's very own "Euro-lira", some eight to 10 billion of them, held abroad in their sole capacity of bargaining chips, ammunition for what, in effect if not intent, amounts to a war against the national currency.

The impact on a country which still imports two-thirds of its needs, compared with a full 90 per cent in its halcyon days, has been dramatic. The Western tourist ready to risk an occasional incoming mortar bomb or missile in Christian Lebanon, plus kidnapping in Muslim Lebanon, would find a sun-drenched financial paradise. He could eat in the best restaurants for £3 or £4. A bottle of whisky, because it is smuggled, would cost him a little under £2. Petrol, because it is subsidised, is about 40p a gallon. Electricity, at a third of a penny a kilowatt-hour, is surely the cheapest in the world.

But, for the average Lebanese householder, it all adds up to a cost-of-living increase over two years of between 250 and 300 per cent. A kilo of mutton has risen from 75 lira to 250 lira, tomatoes from 10 to 40, and sugar from 4.5 to 20.

Local produce can be quite as inflationary as imported goods. "In my village," said a resident of Syrian-controlled territory, "a kilo of olives was three lira two years ago. Today it is 24 lira."

Supermarkets sometimes change their prices twice a day, and unscrupulous pharmaceutical companies employ workers full-time to change the labels on medicines whose life-span has expired.

In most countries with hyper-inflation, wages tend to maintain a more or less constant relationship with prices. But not in Lebanon, where labour unions are agitating for an increase of only 43 per cent to compensate for a cost-of-living increase, since the last one, of 150 per cent. The public prosecutor, the highest paid civil servant in the land, earns 16,000 lira a month — about £169. Last week a newspaper advertisement invited highly qualified computer engineers to apply for jobs with an IBM affiliate offering a salary of 10,000 lira a month. At 2,250 lira, the minimum wage is worth about £21, compared with the £140-plus, at 1,100 lira, it was worth two years ago.

Unemployment is officially estimated at 35 per cent — an optimistic figure — yet some 70,000 Egyptians, 45,000 Sri Lankans, plus other Asians, stay on for about £18 a month, if only because it could now take many of them years to earn the price of a ticket home.

Yet Lebanon, whose people probably still qualify as the best educated, most energetic and resourceful in the Arab world, is still in some ways quite rich. At £2.46 billion, its gold reserves in Fort Knox rank twentieth in the world.

Its citizens hold at least £14 billion in foreign investments. But its foreign currency earnings have recently taken a terrible knock. The £1.4 to £1.7 billion which its emigre workers in the Gulf and elsewhere used to send home has plummeted to some £352 million, thanks both to the collapse in oil prices and the fear which Lebanese, especially the Shi'ites, now inspire in host governments.

Yet Lebanon still earns more in foreign exchange than its Syrian neighbour, with more than three times the population.

Though the society may be rich, the state is poor — and racing towards bankruptcy. It cannot, despite political pressures to do so, touch the gold reserves, because, economists say, that would finally destroy what little confidence is left in its financial institutions. It does not get a penny from what, with the devastation of Lebanese industry, has become Lebanon's largest single export-earner, some £422 million worth of hashish that comes entirely fromthe Syrian-controlled Beka'a Valley.

Next year, the Government has to find 25 billion lira for a budget which, of itself, is an unproductive absurdity.

The Government has turned in desperation to the country's commercial banks. Its internal borrowing is now increasing at such an explosive rate that a debt which stood at a mere 500 million lira in 1979 has risen to 46 billion lira at the beginning of this year and 66 billion lira by October.

The US bases that stayed

AS LABOUR'S non-nuclear defence plans come under increasing pressure from the Government, the Reagan Administration, and large sections of the British media, the "New Zealand analogy" is being scrutinised closely by many of Mr Kinnock's supporters. David Lange's determination to block the entry of American nuclear-armed warships into New Zealand's waters last year aroused an astonishingly fierce reaction in Washington.

New Zealand's prime minister was accused in deliberately alarmist terms of undermining the country's security. The United States threatened economic retaliation. It refused New Zealand future protection under the ANZUS pact. To many observers in London this heavy compaign looked like the dress rehearsal for what a non-nuclear British Labour Party would face. The fact that during the Blackpool party conference in September Mr Kinnock rejected the notion of similarly banning American nuclear-armed vessels from Britain was not thought to invalidate the analogy. What his party is proposing touches on aspects of US policy which are far more sensitive and central to Washington's overall concerns. If Washington felt so strongly about New Zealand, it would be sure to respond to Labour, and not just in words.

Yet there is a better analogy than the New Zealand case which has been strangely overlooked — the experience of Greece. A Socialist Government came to power there five years ago under Mr Andreas Papandreou who had promised, when in opposition, to work for Greece's total withdrawal from Nato, close American bases, and remove their nuclear weapons. For good measure he also offered to hold a referendum on withdrawal from the EEC.

In some ways his task on the morrow of that election victory in October 1981 was easier than that which is likely to face Mr Kinnock if he takes power here. Mr Papandreou's election victory was overwhelming. His party was united, and there were no influential voices in the leadership who secretly or openly doubted the wisdom of the official line. It was only seven yers since the collapse of the military dictatorship, widely assumed to have been backed by Washington, and Mr Papandreou's policy rested on a broader basis of public mistrust of American motives than prevails in Britain. Five years later all the US bases and nuclear weapons remain in Greece. Greece is still a member of Nato. So what made Mr Papandreou and his Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) change, and would Mr Kinnock have better luck?

Senior ministers in Athens argue that Greece obtains no benefits from being in Nato, but they now say that to withdraw would be worse. Yugoslavia, in spite of being a founder-member of the Non-aligned Movement, would not welcome a non-aligned Greece, they say, for fear this would upset the geopolitical power in the Balkans. For Greece itself, the anxiety is that Turkey would be completely unrestrained in what the Greeks believe are its aspirations to take control of the Aegean islands close to its coastline.

Most of Turkey's forces are deployed opposite Greece rather than the Soviet Union and the Greeks are particularly worried by the Fourth Aegean Army, with 147 landing craft which are anchored off the Turkish coast.

Concern about Turkey has been the main factor inhibiting a more radical Greek line on the bases and on nuclear weapons. A second issue has been money, and the anxiety that neutralism would discourage foreign investment. A third one has been the potential reaction of the Greek military. Although the services' top leadership has already been purged by Mr Papandreou's conservative predecessor, Constantine Karamanlis, after the dictatorship fell in 1974, suspicion of Mr Papandreou stretched deep into a largely American-trained officer corps.

Before his election victory, Mr Papandreou had calmed the army's fears by promising to do nothing to inhibit the supply of modern weapons from abroad. For 30 years Greece has received all its tanks, small arms, aircraft and vehicles from the United States. To change suppliers would in itself be an upheaval, so that this commitment by PASOK was already a major step towards maintaining a fundamental relationship with the United States.

In large part real, but also manipulated by the United States, the Turkish lever dominated the security debate between Athens and Washington. The military coup in Ankara which Washington almost certainly helped into being

First of two articles by Jonathan Steele

a year before the Greek elections eased the American path. It made the Greeks more leery of cutting themselves off from the one superpower which, for all its double-dealing, was still the only potential restraining factor against a Turkish junta with expansionist ambitions.

Early on Prime Minister Papandreou decided not to close the bases quickly but to negotiate their removal. They consist of 20 ancillary sites and four large installations, an air base at Hellenikon near Athens, a communications centre for the Sixth Fleet at Nea Makri, an intelligence gathering facility at Heraklion in Crete, and, the most important of the four, a naval and air base at Suda Bay in Crete.

Negotiations began in October 1982 between Yannis Kapsis, a former jounralist who had been imprisoned by the dictatorship, and Reginald Bartholomew, the State Department's special envoy. For the first few months they proceeded cautiously, but in February 1983 the Reagan Administration dropped a bombshell. It announced a doubling of military aid to Turkey (to $930 million) while limiting credits to Greece to the previous year's $282 million, unless the previous Congressional insistence that military aid to Greece be kept at 70 per cent of what Turkey received.

The Prime Minister responded with a letter to Mr Reagan, warning that this could undermine the negotiations and upset the "already fragile stability in the region with unpredictable consequences." However, he did not talk of closing the bases or make any other threats.

Three months later during the Easter recess in the US-Greek talks, Turkish and American jets made a dramatic violation of Greek air space in the Aegean. A week before the negotiations were to resume, it was a reminder of which side the US considered it was on, and what threats Greece might face. The US was still at that stage insisting on a 10-year renewal period for the bases.

Agreement on the bases was finally reached in June 1983. Although its time limit was down to five years, the Americans had obtained the renewal of bases which had once seemed doomed. The United States ended up by doing more in exchange than restoring the proportionate cuts in military aid which they had unilaterally made. The Administration pledged to maintain the seven-to-10 ratio of aid during the lifetime of the agreement.

Greece made some gains in enhancing its sovereignty on points of detail. The Americans must supply information on the bases' mission. US military personnel who commit crimes in Greece have to be tried there. Greece has the right to suspend operations at the bases in an emergency.

The Greeks describe the treaty as "an agreement to remove the bases" while the Americans call it one to preserve them. The Greeks say it is unique in not talking about potential extension, but they have to give five months' formal notice to end it. The Americans will have 17 months after January 1, 1989, to close down the bases. The Americans say they will be able to call for a new treaty.

The American nuclear warheads, which are assigned to Greek units, (164 according to reliable unofficial sources in 1985), are still in place. Mr Papandreou has been trying to organise a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans, and until all chances for an agreement are exhausted he declines to take any unilateral step. Here, too, it is Turkey, with US support, which is resisting the move. Some 489 nuclear warheads are stored there.

Greece's maintenance of the status quo on the bases and the nuclear weapons does not mean it is an easy ally for the rest of NATO. It refuses to take part in NATO exercises in the Aegean and on a whole range of issues it continues to stand out and exert the principles of non-alignment. Mr Papandreou has always described the CIA-backed colonels' coup, in Greece in 1967 as a consequence of the division of Europe, and puts it on a par with the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia a year later. He resists every effort to be dragooned into taking common stands with the rest of NATO if he thinks they are animated by Cold War prejudice (e.g. sanctions against Poland) or by US global ambitions (e.g. pressures on Libya).

He was the only NATO leader to reject the decision to deploy American cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. He is the only one to participate in the Five Continents' Initiative (with Argentina, India, Mexico, Tanzania and Sweden) which has been trying to obtain a superpower test ban.

It would be foolish therefore to see his acceptance of the status quo which he inherited as capitulation. Within the limits of what is possible he continues to seek an independent way. But the fact remains that on the issues of greatest sensitivity to the United States, he has changed his line and given way. Not for nothing do the cynics in Athens claim that the Americans would rather have him in power — a left-winger who accepts the US bases, and thus makes Americans hegemony in Western Europe appear unchallengable — than a rightwing Prime Minister against whom Mr Papandreou would be free to mobilise from outside.

Was that a fair assessment, I asked him during his visit to London for the European Community summit the other day? "I would rather not answer that question," he smiled. It was the only question which he felt he wanted to duck.

Next week: Mr Papandreou speaks.

Lifar — last of the Diaghilev line

By Mary Clarke

SERGE LIFAR, who died in Lausanne last week at the age of 81, was the last of Diaghilev's great male dancers, and the architect of the Paris Opéra Ballet that we know today.

A colourful personnalité bien parisienne, he had a genius for being always in the limelight and did, on occasion, resort to prima donna tactics to score over rival dancers or indulge in such media-delighting exploits as his celebrated duel with another supreme showman, the Marquis de Cuevas. But, fundamentally, he was a great artist whose contribution to ballet in this century cannot be over-estimated.

Born in Kiev in 1905, he took his first lessons there with Bronislava Nijinska (sister of Nijinsky) at the age of 16, and after she rejoined Diaghilev continued to work by himself. Typically, he succeeded in getting himself into the group of her "five best male pupils". Nijinska summoned these five as recruits for the Diaghilev Ballet Russe in 1923 — although she hated him, and said he wasn't even in the top 10. But even if he did not have much technique, he had, already, an extraordinary, exotic stage presence, and it was this physical allure that captivated Diaghilev.

Lifar soon succeeded Anton Dolin in Diaghilev's affections, and was given rigorous training to strengthen his dancing.

Diaghilev also supervised his artistic education and insisted on a nose operation further to enhance the beauty of his face. He was blessed with high cheekbones, a full mouth, big slanting eyes and lustrous black hair. His figure thickened in middle age but his looks never really faded. And he never lost his charm.

Lifar was promoted premier danseur of the Ballet Russe in 1925, and for him, at Diaghilev's behest, Balanchine choreographed the title roles in Apollo (1928) and Le Fils Prodigue (1929).

He made his first experiments in choreography with Diaghilev but it was after the latter's death, in 1929, that he was to embark on a fruitful career as principal choreographer of the Paris Opéra Ballet which lasted for a quarter of a century.

Lifar was appointed principal dancer at the Paris Opéra in 1930 by Jacques Rouché and soon became director of the troupe. Rouché knew his company badly needed an infusion of new blood, for it had fallen into decline and become little more than a frivolous entertainment and a happy hunting ground for dandies in search of danseuses to "protect".

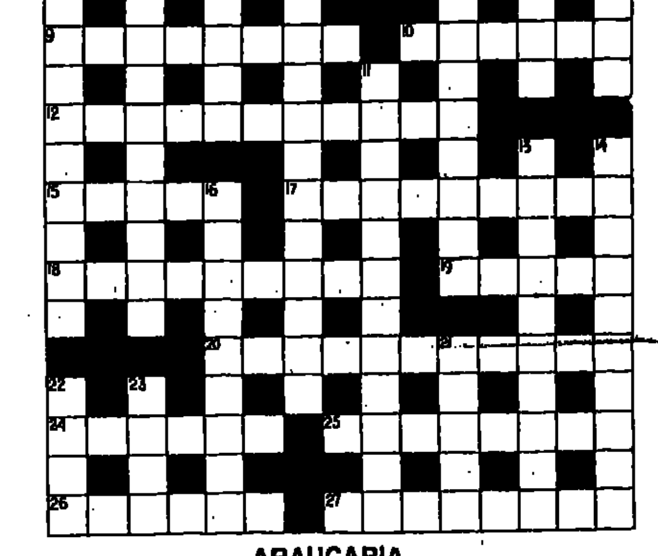
Lifar changed all that. He insisted that ballet be taken as a serious art, that the house-lights be turned down so long as the curtain was up, banned the abonnés from the Foyer de la Danse (to their fury), and set about building a repertory and developing the talents of young dancers emerging from the Opéra's excellent school.

Between 1930 and 1957, he staged more than 50 new ballets, dancing many leading roles himself, but also displaying the gifts of such artists as Lycette Darsonval, supremely Yvette Chauviré, and Nina Vyroubova.

During the war, Lifar danced on at the Opéra despite the German occupation, not because he had any pro-Nazi sympathies but because he needed, then as always, an audience. He danced for applause, not for politics. But, in 1944, he was fired and turned his attention to the formation of Le Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo.

Without Lifar, however, the Paris Opéra Ballet began to go down, and Georges Hirsch soon called him back. He gave his last performance at the Opéra in Giselle (Albrecht was one of his greatest roles) on December 5, 1956, and finally left the Opéra in 1958.

Lifar was the author of many books. Among them were Serge Diaghilev (1939), the second part of which, called With Diaghilev, is autobiographical; Carlotta Grisi (1941); Griselle (1942); L'Histoire du Ballet Russe (1945); and Les Trois Grâces du XXe Siècle (1959) about his goddesses Pavlova, Karsavina, and Spessivtseva.



ARAUCARIA

ACROSS

1. Non-glossy hair of flock, perhaps (8).
5. Drink, for example, when medal's returned (3, 3).
9, 10, 19, paintings, maybe, take quiet step like 1 across (8, 6).
12. Student in alarm that's given by the Pope (7, 4).
15. Speeds often threatened with abolition (5).
17. Try the last sound ever? (9).
18. Seabird gets round in Welsh river in time for lotus-eaters (9).
19. Wife having to pay her share? (5).
20. Wife hits log, getting wrecked off South coast (4, 2, 5).
24. Number hardly equal to supplying applause (6).
25. Parrot-bill (the plant: "parrot" 's in a different page (5-3).
26. Set animal to importune (6).
27. Jealous viewer, even in colour, to a point (5, 3).

DOWN

1. Dominant trend, including this month the Sappers, Your Majesty (4, 6).
2. Snare to put in head of Frenchman: it has four cases (10).
3. Country, river, mountain (4).
4. Held two ports to prevent revolution? (4, 3, 5).
6. Swine turns up, wandering Alps with no date, between Alps and sea (9).
7. Refusal to America is common sense (4).
8. Giant to love dancing girl (2-2).
11. Wave following — terrible danger for evening at home? (6, 6).
13. Shepherd's dish, a sort of loaf going with bird (7, 3).
14. A Catholic success — go wild round the door (10).
16. Used rivet to effect bondage (9).
21. Inferior new or second-hand piece (5).
22, 23. Blackleg poet sheathes sword (8).

M	O	T	O	R	A	I	L		C	R	A	V	E	N
U		H		U		N				O		I		O
E	N	R	O	B	I	N	G		B	E	A	G	L	E
S		O		B		O				N		N		A
L	A	W	R	E	N	C	E		A	T	H	E	N	S
I		N		R		E		S		G		R		I
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R	O	C	K	S	A	L	M	O	N					
I		C		P		Y		K		P		P		P
G	O	O	S	E	Y		H	E	A	R	H	E	A	R
A		U		C				O		O		R		O
T	I	T	B	I	T		M	A	R	T	I	N	E	T
E		R		A				R		E		O		E
S	T	E	A	L	S		A	S	W	A	N	D	A	M

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No 1938

White mates in two moves, against any defence (by C. P. Swindley, 1985). This two-mover won first prize in a competition in The Problemist, the magazine of the British Chess Problem Society, which welcomes new members. For information, write to the BCPS at 14 Newton Park Drive, Leeds 7.

Solution No. 1937:

White K at QR8, Q at QR4, R at KB7, P at KN5. Black K at Q4, Ps at Q3 and K4. Mate in three. 1 R-QR7. If 1 . . . K-K3 2 Q-K4 P-Q4, 3 Q-N6. If 1 . . . K-B4 2 R-B7 ch K-Q (K-N3 3 R-B6) 3 Q-B4. If 1 . . . P-K5 2 R-R5 ch K-K3 3 Q-K8.

WORLD champion Gary Kasparov and Artur Yusupov were the players who carried the Soviet Union to gold medals at the chess Olympics in Dubai, in spite of the strong challenge from England and the US. Judged by traditional USSR standards, the rest of their team had indifferent performances. There were rumours of tension in the camp due to the well-known antipathy between Kasparov and Karpov and the position of Andrei Sokolov as challenger to both.

Russian point totals were Kasparov 8½ out of 11, Karpov and Sokolov 6/9, Yusupov 10/12, Vaganian 7/10 and Cheshkovsky 2½/5. Kasparov lost to US champion Seirawan, Karpov went down to Ljubojevic of Yugoslavia, while Sokolov and Vaganian were crushed by Nunn and Chandler in games already given here.

Naturally, there were still occasions when Kasparov played like a true world champion: here he outclasses a young grandmaster.

GM Julio Granda Zuniga (Peru) — GM Gary Kasparov (USSR)
QP, Neo-Grunfeld (Dubai 1986)

1 N-KB3 N-KB3	2 P-KN3 P-KN3
3 B-N2 B-N2	4 0-0 0-0
5 P-B4 P-Q4	6 P-Q4

Here 6 PxP is more precise, conceding Black less chance for active play.

6 . . . PxP	7 N-R3 P-B6
8 PxP P-B4	9 N-K5 N-B3!
10 NxN PxN	11 Q-Q3

The obvious 11 BxP? is a book trap: B-R6! 12 R-K1 N-Q4! so that if 13 BxR NxP 14 Q-Q3 QxB 15 P-B3 BxP ch when Black's strong position outweighs his slight material deficit.

11 . . . N-Q4	12 R-Q1 Q-R4
13 B-N2 R-N1	14 Q-B2 RxB!

Again an exchange sacrifice for position, but this time for White's other bishop.

15 QxR NxP	16 [illegible]
17 BxP B-QR3	18 N-N1

White has to return material, for if 18 R-Q2 P-Q6!

18 . . . BxR	19 PxB Q-R3
20 NxN PxN	21 Q-N5 QxQ
22 BxQ R-N1	23 B-R4 P-B7
24 R-KB1 R-N7	25 Resigns

After Kasparovian tactics, a simple endgame win. If 25 B-N3 B-B6 and B-Q7 forces White to surrender his bishop for the pawn.

England's disaster against Spain gave the United States a clear lead with a real chance for gold.

The US Chess Federation had resolved to withdraw in mid-Olympics unless FIDE took effective action against Dubai's refusal of Israeli visas. FIDE instead adopted a compromise proposal that organisers not guaranteeing visas for all would require a 75 per cent FIDE vote rather than a simple majority to approve their event.

GM Yasser Seirawan (US) — IM H. Ardiansyah (Indonesia)
King's Indian Defence (Dubai 1986)

1 P-QB4 N-KB3	2 P-Q4 P-KN3
3 N-QB3 B-N2	4 P-K4 P-Q3
5 P-B3 0-0	6 B-K3 P-K4
7 P-Q5 N-R4	8 KN-K2 P-KB4
9 Q-Q2 N-Q2	10 0-0-0 KN-B3
11 P-KR3 PxP	12 PxP P-QR3
13 P-KN4 P-QN4	14 N-N3 PxP
15 P-N5 N-K1	16 BxP N-N3
17 B-K2 B-Q2	18 P-KR4 Q-K2
19 QR-B1 RxR ch	20 RxR B-N4
21 NxB PxN	22 P-N3 Q-Q2
23 K-N1 R-N1	24 P-R5 P-B4
25 PxP ep QxP	26 P-R6 B-R1
27 B-N4 P-Q4	28 BxN Resigns

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

I ALWAYS enjoy taking part in what has become the most important European pairs event, the Cino del Duca. Mme Cino del Duca has been promoting this competition in memory of her late husband, who loved the game of bridge, and 550 pairs took the places at the Palais Chaillot in Paris for the 1986 competition.

The *Cino del Duca* is a difficult contest to win because of the short distance: it is only a two session event, and you need to play extremely well and have your share of the lucky breaks to finish in the top places. Nevertheless, the top 50 pairs every year always contain many famous names; this year's championship was won by Karl Rohan and Kurt Feichtinger (Austria) with a convincing score of over 65 per cent; Mari and Levy (France) were second with 65 per cent, and a Polish pair took third place. Kantar and Robinson (USA) were seventh, and the best British performance was by Hackett and Sowter who came 17th.

I played in the event with my good friend Stefan Ballan of France. We had a poor first session which left plenty of room for improvement, and managed to jump 150 places in the second session. One of my most humiliating experiences occurred on the following hand dealt by East with East-West vulnerable.

WEST	EAST
♠ A	♠ Q 7
♥ A Q 9 8 7	♥ K J 3
♦ A K 10 8	♦ Q J 9 4
♣ 10 9 8	♣ K,4 3 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Markus		Ballan	
		1D(1)	NB
2H	2S	3H	NB
4NT(2)	5S	NB	NB
6H	NB	NB	6S
6NT(3)	NB	NB	NB

(1) I do not consider this hand to be an opening bid, but my partner likes to get things under way whenever he can count 12 or 13 points. (2) I was not sure whether I was on my way to 6H or 7H.

(3) I was determined not to be done out of my slam, but I was half hoping that the opponents would sacrifice in 7S.

Fortunately, my left-hand opponent chose a neutral heart lead, and I thought I was in with a chance. The king of spades and the ace of clubs were obviously in the North hand. If North's club holding was something like A-Q-J, A-Q-x-x or A-J-x-x, I could visualise a perfect pseudo-squeeze ending. Having cashed my nine red-suit tricks the position could be

1NORTH
♠ K J
♥ —
♦ —
♣ A Q

WEST	EAST
♠ A	♠ Q 7
♥ —	♥ —
♦ —	♦ —
♣ 10 9 8	♣ K 4

SOUTH
Immaterial

I would then play a club towards dummy and, not knowing that my ace of spades was singleton, North would be certain to go up with the ace and exit with her remaining club, enabling me to make the last trick with the established ten of clubs.

Excited by the prospect of this brilliant coup, I won the heart lead and cashed all my hearts and diamonds, noting with interest that North discarded four spades and one club. I then prepared for the kill, and led a club towards dummy's doubleton king — only for North to show out!

"Take your club tricks," I said to South, for I was anxious to shorten the agony. "No," said the lady on my left, "you must play the hand out." I felt like hitting her, instead of which I had to enter 6NT—4 on the travelling score sheet.

One of the winners' many good results came on the following hand, dealt by East at love all.

WEST	EAST
♠ Q J 10 9 7 6 5 2	♠ —
♥ A 3	♥ K J 8
♦ K 6	♦ Q J 9 7
♣ 5	♣ K Q J 9 8 6

Playing a Strong Club system, Rohan and Feichtinger bid 1D-4S-no bid, although I would have thought that the West hand was too strong for an immediate jump to 4S.

North led a small heart, and Kurt Feichtinger played for the only chance. He won in hand with the ace and immediately finessed dummy's jack of hearts, which held the trick. The king of hearts then provided a parking place for West's singleton club, and he was home for the loss of two spades and one diamond. +420 was an excellent result on the board.

Nimrod — less than the whole truth

THE much-trailed decision has been announced: the Government has decided against the home-made Nimrod airborne early warning system and in favour of the American Awacs. The last ditch stand of Mr Jim Prior, the chairman of GEC which produces the Nimrod avionics, has been to no avail. Contracts are being cancelled. Jobs will be lost. Britain moves out of this highly specialised area of technology, and abandons the export potential of the proposed arrangement between GEC and Lockheed. It is indeed a sad day for our high-tech industrial base.

The Defence Secretary, Mr Younger, dressed up his statement to Parliament with much sadness and regret and tribute to GEC. It made no difference to the bottom line: his advice from his Ministry of Defence experts was unanimous; for him the ultimate decision was therefore not a difficult one. "This is a sad decision to have to take, but I have no doubt that it is the right one." He used the presently fashionable Tory defence language, from the paramountcy of the defence criteria to the military threat. It is as though in this single area of political decision-making the language of compromise so central to government is absent, as though here alone there are absolutes.

The absolute so much referred to in Mr Younger's statement was ASR400, the air staff requirement. It was as though this had been handed down on a tablet of stone. The two systems had not been compared, stressed the Defence Secretary; they had each been compared with ASR400. Boeing matched up; Nimrod did not convince. This is all good, everyday defence staff-speak. It says that there are Requirements, and that these must be met. End of debate.

Though Mr Younger never let on, this is, of course, far from reality. Defence staffs do not lay down requirements and get them. Compromise is as much a part of their world as it is of welfare, of taxation levels, or road building programmes. There is not a level of spending, or a level of performance, which provides complete defence, and is therefore approved. If defence staff "requirements" were holy writ then we would have more tanks and more ships. Defence is about matching desired objectives against economic and political reality. Mr Younger seemed to suggest that this was not the case.

Of course it is important that Britain has an areial defence system which works, and if Nimrod was simply a hopeles, inefficient case then there would be no argument. But Mr Younger said again that Nimrod does work. The problem, he said, was a failure to achieve a consistent and reliable pattern of results, and his lack of confidence that this could be achieved in the time GEC had stated. The emphasis was on the defence requirement during hostilities, as though a year or two was life and death. Yet the Shackletons now in use are already obsolescent, and the first Awacs will not be delivered until 1991. Again, Mr Younger was not giving all the facts in the House when he talked about cost. The supposedly sacrosanct defence requirement is for eight Awacs, costing £1050m. But the Defence Secretary announced the ordering of six, for £860m. He will see if he can afford the other two. So much for the "requirement".

Ultimately, the experts' views have been accepted as outweighing the cost to this country in jobs, technology, and exports. The decision has been taken after an enormous amount of money has been spent, and it has granted Boeing a worldwide monopoly which will earn them vast profits for decades to come. When the contracts with Boeing come to be signed he must make very sure that the offset arrangements, whereby Boeing spend £130 in this country for every £100 they are paid for their aircraft, is watertight. Otherwise those who lose their jobs as a result of last week's decision will have cause for bitterness. Mr Younger said job losses caused by Nimrod cancellation will be equalled or exceeded by new jobs through the Boeing offset arrangements. We shall see.

Hard Lucca

ITALIANS have been agog at the spectacle of the squabbling contenders for the estate (which includes the rights from his operas) of Giacomo Puccini, who died 62 years ago. Claimant number one is the illegitimate daughter of Puccini's own illegitimate son, Antonio. Last year, after 12 years' litigation, she established her legal right to be known as Simonetta Puccini — and she is not going to let anyone come between her and the estate.

But she has a problem. When Antonio Puccini died in 1946, he left his father's money and property to his wife, a Milanese baroness. When she in turn died, without children, the Puccini estate went to her brother, the Baron Livio dell'Anna. Now the baron, a Riviera socialite, has died in a Milan hospice, bequeathing everything to no less a figure than his lifetime butler. So this latterday Figaro now becomes the owner not only of Puccini's possessions (including his villa at Torre de Lago in the Tuscan coastal pinewoods) but of the rights to his operas including La Boheme, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, and Turandot. And, if that were not enough, a third claimant has now entered the competition. The Puccini Foundation, which thought it had the rights to Puccini's birthplace in Lucca and to the composer's villas and which exists to perpetuate his memory as a musician, is also anxious to protect itself against the granddaughter and the butler. As a result, a Lucca court has sequestered the entire contested estate, pending a final decision as to which of the three claimants should triumph.

It could make a Puccini opera, and it would not be the first time that the composer's extrovert lifestyle found itself influencing his work. Not so long ago, a production of Turandot in Glasgow transferred much of the action from Imperial Peking to Torre del Lago in order to point up the connections between Gozzi's cruel play on which the opera is based and the domestic scandal which engulfed Puccini in 1909, when his servant Doria Manfedi committed suicide after allegations of a relationship with the composer that went beyond the call of duty. But the most striking parallel is already there. Puccini's one act comic opera, Gianni Schicchi, is precisely about a will. It tells of the anguish of the relatives of a recently deceased Florentine when they discover that he has willed his entire fortune to a monastery. They call in Schicchi, who agrees to impersonate the dead man and to dictate a new will, leaving the estate to the relatives. That isn't quite what Schicchi has in mind, of course, and he duly wills the valuables to himself, leaving the house to his daughter and her lover. Somehow, we suspect there may be a Gianni Schicchi alive and active in Lucca in 1986, too.

The onus is on the Americans

AFTER 500 days the self-imposed moratorium on nuclear testing by the Soviet Union may be about to end. That would not imply any worsening of relations between the superpowers, as the Soviet ambassador in Washington has tried to make clear; and there is still time for the US to start negotiations which, irrespective of whether it tests more weapons, would postpone a Soviet resumption. The stated object of successive Soviet leaders is that parity, nothing more, should exist between the two sides, and there is no reason to disbelieve that. Gorbachev is the first to put flesh on the dry bone by his startling proposals at Reykjavik in which parity would be maintained at a fraction of the present level. But the corollary is that if the United States is modernising its hardware (by going ahead, for example, with the mobile Midgetman missile) so must the USSR. Even if Gorbachev believes he has all the missiles at his command that any deterrent posture could require, he would still have to satisfy the military that technical parity was being maintained.

The onus is on the US to make clear the grounds for its opposition to a comprehensive test ban. Reagan is the first President since Truman not to have paid at least lip-service to the idea. The first hurdle was verification. The Russians could not be trusted not to cheat. When seismologists began to say they could distinguish a Soviet test from an earthquake, and the Russians conceded something on inspection, the grounds changed. The Pentagon said that, verification or no, it needed to go on testing for military reasons. There may be truth in that if indeed the weapon design of the 1970s relied on continued updating of the warheads. But the military reasons did not impress a majority in the House of Representatives, which voted 258-148 for negotiations on a ban, and 234-155 for a year's ban in any case. They do not impress the group of 25 Nobel laureates who publicly protested at the US position early this year. There is no reason, therefore, why they should impress anybody else.

It seems more than smart PR when the Soviet ambassador says he understands the administration's reluctance to stop testing and therefore proposes a phased reduction instead. It is of a piece with the serious Soviet approach to divisive questions which reached its peak (so far) at Reykjavik. The assumption is that the administration's enthusiasm for repeated testing is to devise a nuclear motor for the laser weapons envisaged in the Star Wars programme.

Yet if the Russians were to compete in this field they would need such a motor too. If they are willing to renounce the proposition the US should do so too. For if there is any cheating on the Soviet side (which seismologists say they would detect) it would not be too late, even if it were regrettable, to start again. In this regard, as unfortunately in others, the American administration does not at present have much going for it.

Poems as a defence against the gulag horror

Michael Simmons on the poet whom the Soviet authorities have allowed to visit the West for medical treatment

IRINA Ratushinskaya, who arrived in London from Moscow last week, looks frail for a woman of 32 and in ill health. But she is a formidable personality who, during years of harsh imprisonment, has derived strength from a belief in God and in herself as a poet of extraordinary power.

In rejecting her, the Soviet authorities have shown that even in the compartatively enlightened Gorbachev era, an idiosyncratic creative talent is something "the system" simply cannot cope with.

It is not that they don't love and honour their poets. Some of the biggest statues in Soviet cities are of poets — usually from pre-revolutionary times — and volumes of poetry are regular bestsellers. But Stalin played his part in Mayakovsky's suicide and Mandelstam's death in a labour camp, and Pasternak and Akhmatova were intermittently harassed and denigrated until their deaths in 1960 and 1966 respectively. Poets under Soviet rule have often died early, and often by their own hand.

Ratushinskaya was arrested in September 1982 and released last October. From a small and cluttered flat in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, she went no fewer than 16 times to the visa office to haggle with obdurate bureaucrats and remove the obstacles to her departure for London.

She met obduracy with persistence and perseverance. One sticking point has been her determination that she and her husband, Igor Geraschenko, keep their Soviet citizenship. "We can and must defend human rights by doing this," she said the other day. "It will be very difficult to leave the country and very difficult to return. I don't know if they will let me."

Her wish to commute between exile and her homeland — she was, like Anna Akhmatova, born near Odessa — testifies to the roots of her talent. What resources she will draw upon once she is, as it were, settled in the West, remain unquantifiable. But it would seem very probable that the end results could be very different in character from what has gone before.

But whatever comes next, her reputation is assured, and by common consent she is ranked as one of the most "natural" poets of her generation.

Her trouble, as with so many square pegs in Soviet holes, was her irrepressible energy as well as her originality. It was characteristic when she was reading physics at Odessa University and during a brief spell as a lecturer, that she gained much pleasure from writing humorous sketches for student theatre groups.

It was equally in character that she gravitated to the Polish (gentry) side of her family rather than anything Soviet in her earlier life; that she rejected socialism in favour of Catholicism: and finally that she turned away from humorous writing to a more introspective poetry.

In 1972, aged 18, she was apparently recognised by the security authorities as a dissident element. In that year, the KGB asked her to become an informer. She refused, but she became a marked woman. By 1977, she was being closely interrogated for "anti-Soviet attitudes."

About this time, too, she realised that the urge — "vocation" is Igor's word — to write poetry was inescapable, as inescapable as what she saw as the unacceptability of the Soviet way of life and the harassment that had become their lot. Applications to leave the country in 1980 — the last rigid phase of the Brezhnev era — did nothing to help their cause, nor did participation in a human rights demonstration in the centre of Moscow in 1981.

For a while it seemed that apples might save them. She and her husband were recruited to help in the 1982 harvest in the Kiev area, but the people who recruited them were not what they seemed, and evidence from *shabashniki* (casual workers) around them was enough to have her arrested.

By the evening of the same day, Igor says, she was being accused of "an especially serious state crime: the writing of poems." Indeed she had been told by the KGB head office (no less) in mid-1981 that her verses were a threat to the security of the Soviet Union. Her charge, when she was tried in March 1983, was "manufacture and dissemination of poems," and "anti-state agitation and propaganda."

The word "slander" came up 150 times during the trial, but Irina declined to join in the proceedings because, she claimed, she could not choose her own lawyer. Even so, she was found guilty — not least, of "an unenthusiastic way of thinking" — and sentenced to seven years hard labour to be followed by five years' internal exile, a total term which would have been completed in 1995.

Her physical sufferings and her physical deterioration, during imprisonment can only be imagined. She had been something of a fitness fanatic in her time — a keen hiker, a powerful long-distance swimmer, an adroit table tennis player. She lost more than three stones in weight, contracted high blood pressure and a kidney disease so acute that a year ago there were fears she would not survive.

She had her head shaved, was beaten, force-fed, and placed in solitary confinement in often freezing conditions. There was almost no medical treatment and no family visits.

But still, astonishingly, the poetry flowed, even during a four-month spell in solitary. In all, during four years in prison there were more than 250 poems. Occasionally, pen and paper were available, when they were not, the verse was scratched on to bars of soap with a matchstick, committed to memory, and then washed away down the sink.

Irina says the writing was "not difficult." God, it seems, and the sense of vocation made it easier. The difficult part was memorising all 250 of them and, in the mind, indexing them and the precise time when they were written. Each poem notionally merited extra time on her sentence. That could be lived with — the fact that she, and therefore, the poetry might be forgotten, could not.

Asked why she was finally released, she said perhaps it was something to do with the efforts by the Gorbachev administration to democratise. "But," she added, "I would not call it a humanitarian gesture, more a kind of show."

Le Monde

ENGLISH SECTION

Moscow television reported on December 19 the visit of a Politburo member (Mr Solomentsev) to Alma Ata, but without making any reference to the riots that had taken place in this city and which the Soviet media had covered the same morning. The disturbances, which it has now been confirmed caused several deaths, draw attention to the ways in which the new Soviet leadership's nationalities policy has been swept off course in the past year or so.

Ligachev may carry the can for riots in Kazakhstan

By Michel Tatu

"WHENEVER a representative of Central Asia or Transcaucasia is portrayed on our screens, he is usually depicted as a coarse bumpkin speaking with an appalling accent and wearing a *papakha* (fur hat worn by easterners) or a stupid old-fashioned cap. He is most often employed in the trade sector. In a funny piece — if one may put it that way — that appeared in our eminent Literaturnaya Gazeta, one writer even tried to sketch out a sort of arithmetical mean for an inhabitant of Central Asia and Transcaucasia."

This cri de coeur from the Armenian writer Petrosian Vardgues last June about certain oversimplifications in the Soviet cinema, was only one of many protests that were made by participants at the Soviet Writers' Congress concerning the wider question of national minorities and the fate reserved for their cultures. Others condemned the monopoly exercised by Moscow in making decisions on national language issues, "the creeping tendency to reduce the population of local origin" in certain republics (in this particular case, Latvia, but the criticism is just as applicable to Kazakhstan), the dangers threatening local languages and so on. In view of the recent disturbances in Alma Ata, these appeals appear to have been warnings, and it is clear they were not heeded.

For the nationalities policy seems to have gone off course following the change of leadership in 1985.

The party programme adopted by the 27th Congress last March in fact introduced no fundamental changes in this area. On the one hand, it contains well-worn self-congratulatory statements proclaiming that the problem has been "successfully resolved", and that the objective aimed at is to "bring nations and ethnic groups ever closer together", indeed to ensure "their total unity". And, on the other, the programme also points out that it will be possible to reach this final goal only "in a distant historical perspective" and that care must be taken to avoid "any artificial acceleration" in a process that has to remain underpinned by "voluntary action, equality and brotherly cooperation". But statements made at the party congress and elsewhere clearly showed that such an acceleration was under way on at least two points.

On the language issue, first, the emphasis has been on bringing Russian into general use both in education and in the army, which was already under Leonid Brezhnev considered to be the special crucible of homo sovieticus. Writing in the journal, Kommunist, last May, Academician Bromlei noted that the proportion of Soviets claiming to speak Russian had risen from 76 to 82 per cent between 1970 and 1979, but he also pointed out that "in certain republics, young people today have a less firmer grasp of this language than the average population." In his opinion, therefore, there was a need to promote "a further extension and qualitiative improvement of the knowledge of Russian, especially in the rural zones of Central Asia, Transcaucasia and Estonia."

It is a situation which, in Central Asia especially, has led to the almost exclusive construction of Russian-language schools at the expense of the others.

There are even more pronounced signs that the nationalities policy has gone off the rails in the movements of workers and management executives. The party programme is quite clear on this, since it provides for "promoting exchanges of management executives and specialists among republics, for widening and improving the training of skilled workers among citizens of all nationalities and ethnic groups." An apparently praiseworthy goal which in practice has resulted in speeding up Russianisation on the one hand, and uprooting local populations on the other.

It is no accident that the disturbances have taken place in Kazakhstan, the very republic which has served as a testing ground in recent years for conducting the policy of "intermingling management executives". Appointing a Russian, Gennadi V. Kolbin, who had never worked in Kazakhstan, to take the place of the dismissed 74-year-old Kazakh leader, Dinmukhamed Kunayev, proved to be the last straw, though there was nothing very unusual about such a posting. Kunayev's three predecessors in the '50s were two Russians, Leonid Brezhnev and Nikolai Beliayev, and a Byelorussian, Pantaleimon Ponomarenko.

Lower down in the 19 regions making up Kazakhstan, there are eight Russian first secretaries as against 10 Kazakhs. The most recent appointment has been of a German, Braun, as party leader in the virgin soils regions in place of a Russian. Doubtless in response to discreet pressure from Bonn, concessions have recently been made to the former Volga Germans who were deported by Stalin, about a million of whom are now living in Kazakhstan.

Kazakhs are not entitled to similar consideration, but the situation was scarcely different under Brezhnev. In 1981, there were seven Russian regional secretaries compared with 11 "nationals". At any rate, Kazakhstan had been and still is the least favoured as a nation than neighbouring Central Asian republics (only two Russians among Uzbekistan's 12 regional secretaries, for example); even the practice of making sure Moscow has its eyes and ears locally, which was organised and perfected under Stalin, is still in force everywhere. Wherever the party head is a local man, his immediate deputy is a Russian or some other Slav sent in by the central apparatus as a second secretary. The fact that Kolbin had already played a similar role in Georgia may well have added to the discontent in Alma Ata.

It should also be noted that the most enthusiastic promoter of the policy of "intermingling management executives" is not Mikhail Gorbachev, who has not said much on the subject, but the party's No 2 man, Yegor Ligachev, who oversees at the central secretariat the movements of personnel and therefore must have played a key role in naming Kolbin to head the party in Kazakhstan. Speaking about the Brezhnev period at the 27th Congress, Ligachev had in fact criticised "local and regionalist outlooks" which "prevented promoting representatives of all the nationalities to management posts, hampered the exchange of management executives among regions and the interchange of experienced government employees between republics and the centre."

Will the Alma Ata riots, announced so quickly by Tass, serve as a pretext for high-level discussions aimed at reshuffling posts, or even getting rid of Ligachev? Things will become clearer at the next plenary session of the central committee, which was postponed in November and has now been promised for the end of the year. It is all the more important, as the "management executives policy" — the very same one whose effects have been seen in Kazakhstan — is down on its agenda.

(December 21/22)

The Government has accepted the report of a national committee on in vitro fertilisation (see page 14). Plantu's cartoon shows Interior Minister Pasqua as the doctor.

CHAD claimed at the weekend that Libya had lost more than 400 men ... 17 tanks in a counter-attack by Chadians in the north of the country. The renewed fighting came as the US speeded up an emergency airlift of $15 million in arms and ammunition to government forces in Chad.

A statement issued by Chad's military command said that Libyan soldiers were routed at Bardai in the rugged northern Tibesti mountains by followers of former rebel leader, Mr Goukouni Oueddei, who until recently was backed by Tripoli. Libya has denied any involvement in the Chad fighting.

Gadafy takes a beating in Chad

COMMENT

AT MINOR political and military cost to itself — for now, anyway — France has reasserted its support for the government of Hissène Habré while reminding Colonel Moamer Gadafy that it is keeping a watchful eye on developments in northern Chad. The airdrop of supplies in the Tibesti hills carried out on the night of December 16/17 by two Transall aircraft does however amount to much more than giving "humanitarian" aid to the Toubou people who have been suffering from the exactions of the Libyan army. Apart from supplies of food and blankets, anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons have been airlifted to troops who have remained loyal to Goukouni Oueddei (a former Chadian President who led a rebellion against the present government of Hissène Habré with the help of Libyan troops, but is now believed to be a prisoner in Tripoli) to help them counter the Libyan President's strategy of encircling the Tibesti massif.

By intervening north of the 16th parallel in a zone controlled until now by Libya and its allies, Paris has taken another step in what Tripoli sees as an "escalation" of France's military presence in Chad. The decision, which was moreover reached unanimously by the French President and the Prime Minister, has the added advantage of demonstrating once again that France stands by its closest African allies who are still apprehensive of Colonel Gadafy's expansionist ambitions.

It was not, however, with any great joy that Paris resolved to take the risk of seeing French planes shot down by Libyan fighters. Both the Elysée and the Matignon, as well as the Defence Ministry decided it was better to take limited action now rather than be forced in the near future to mount a large-scale operation to halt the Libyan advance.

There is no certainty, however, that the "signal" sent to the Libyan leader will be sufficient to make him desist. Colonel Gadafy has in fact suffered a major setback since the defection of Goukouni Oueddei's followers, who have opened two fronts — in Tibesti and Ennedi, in the very heart of a zone considered as a Libyan buffer by Tripoli.

In this way Paris has made it clear that the strategy of trying to negotiate with Tripoli, which until only a few weeks ago the prime minister's office only half believed in, has now been dropped. France today considers that its Arab partners themselves are in a position to draw a distinction between its Middle East policy and its army's intervention in Chad that has been made necesary by its historic ties with Africa and Colonel Gadafy's behaviour. At any rate, Paris could not, without forfeiting the advantages of its Operation Sparrowhawk, turn a deaf ear to Hissène Habre's appeals for help relayed by several African heads of state.

Two planeloads of supplies obviously do not fulfil the Chadian President's expectations. At the very most it gives the Chadian fighters in Tibesti a breathing space, and it is now up to N'Djamena's army to do the rest.

There remains the question whether this help will be sufficient for the Chadian leader to successfully win back the northern part of his territory which in all probability he will never be prepared to write off. For the moment, Habré, who likes to compare himself and his men to Afghan resistance fighters, seems to think the West is giving enough aid to help them avert defeat, but not enough to permit victory. The recent airdrops do prove, though, that France has not finished with its commitment in Chad and that other moves can be expected.

(December 19)

'Patients used for Aids vaccine experiments'

By Franck Nouchi

A FRANCO-ZAIREAN scientific team, based in Kinshasa and headed by Professor Daniel Zagury of the Pierre-et-Marie-Curie University in Paris, is said to be currently testing a vaccine against acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids) on HTLV3 positive human beings. The substance used would appear to be extracts of the Aids virus membrane capable of stimulating the body's immune system, which the researchers hope will protect it against the appearance of the disease.

So it is not strictly speaking a vaccine, but a therapeutic method likely to prevent patients exposed to the Aids virus from developing the disease. The disclosure of these experiments, made by the New York Times, following on the heels of rumours suggesting that "unauthorised" vaccination tests were being conducted in Zaire, has left the scientific community puzzled.

The first point: it is not a vaccine against Aids, since the few people said to be taking part in the tests have already been infected by the disease, whereas a vaccine protects a healthy person against the appearance of a disease.

For his experiments, which appear to make use of the virus membrane, Professor Zagury is either collecting the infected patient's lymphocytes — and this is the most probable guess — and activating them in vitro with extracts of the virus's membranes, after which all that remains is to reinject the reactivated lymphocytes back into the patient; or he is quite simply injecting extracts from membranes directly.

The tests, on a limited number of patients, are reported to have been conducted since September in the greatest of secrecy, but with the permission of the Zairean health authorities.

Dr Jonathan Mann, the World Health Organisation expert in charge of the agency's Aids programme, told me he was not aware

Continued on page 13

Why we need AFP

The head of Agence France Presse, Mr Henri Pigeat, resigned on Thursday after prolonged criticism from journalists who immediately called off their week-long strike. The agency lost £6.8 million last year despite shedding 140 of its 2,000 staff. Further severe job cuts demanded by management have been frozen.

THE CRISIS, perhaps fatal, which has silenced the French news agency, Agence France-Presse, over the past week is not a mere social conflict brought on by financial difficulties.

For the most part ignored by the public, and frequently treated with condescension by political leaders, AFP is not only the main organ of the French press, it is also one of the major sources of news for the whole world. Neither a machine for transmitting raw copy — such a thing has never existed — nor an instrument for disseminating official communiqués, a worldwide news agency is a very complex combination of men and technical infrastructures whose aim is as simple as it is ambitious — report as honestly and as quickly as possible what is happening on our planet. Not only transmit information, but also go in search of it and provide the maximum of elements likely to help the reader in forming his own judgment.

COMMENT

Four Western agencies have this ambition, and until now only one of them is French. And yet, it is not "the voice of France". Nothing would be more damaging than to set out to defend AFP by invoking this argument which cuts both ways. The agency has already suffered far too much by being identified sometimes as a government mouthpiece.

But AFP is necessary for France as for the rest of the world because it has a universal calling. It has its weaknesses. But exclusive dependence on American agencies — AP and UPI (the latter is also endangered) — and a British agency (Reuters), for which information strictly speaking is only a secondary aspect of its activities, increases the risk of being mistaken on, or completely overlooking, certain events particularly in the Third World.

If AFP disappears or, which is more probable, if it is reduced to the status of a mere subcontractor, a "national" agency, it would have very special consequences for France. Government departments and embassies would quickly regret it, Radio-France Internationale would not have very much to do, and French newspapers — not just those which have few or no correspondents in the world — would be poorer. What is even worse, the French, who are not madly keen about what is happening in the world outside, would be likely to become even more introspective.

The causes of the dispute are complex, and responsibility for it is doubtless shared. There is a question of financing, and this concerns the State. There is also a question of people. Questionable decisions need to be reviewed, and certain corporatist and psychological barriers must be removed. But the stake is much too important not to do everything possible to overcome these difficulties — and very quickly.

(December 19)

Time for Pasqua to throw light on Carrefour scandal

"I believe you have just heard the programme of the Minister of the Interior for the coming weeks," said Charles Pasqua on Monday, December 15, at the end of a radio programme in which he was taking part. The minister announced several decisions. First, the suspension — as a "conservatorial measure" — of Sergeant Schmitt, the leader of the "peloton voltigeur motocycliste" (acrobatic motorcyle squad) whose members are suspected of having assaulted a 22-year-old student, *Malik Oussekine*, who later died). Next the seizure of a television film sequence, entitled "Les Casseurs", which was shown on December 7.

Thirdly, the minister announced he planned to take action against the daily Communist Party organ L'Humanité and its editor-in-chief, Claude Cabanes, whom he accused of having suggested that police *agent provocateurs* were present among the student demonstrators.

Pasqua was next questioned at length on the Carrefour du Développement case, and especially on the part of the case concerning the issue of a "genuine-but-fake" passport concocted by the DST (Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire — counter-intelligence service), and the refusal, on the grounds it was a "defence secret", by the head of the DST, Bernard Gérard, to testify on the matter before the investigating magistrate, Jean-Pierre Michau. He then announced he would file a libel suit against Le Monde's Georges Marion and Edwy Plenel, who conducted an investigation that concluded that the "genuine-but-fake" passport was issued with the permission of the Minister of the Interior. Pasqua also invoked "defence secrets" in refusing to answer questions on this subject. But he denied the information and accused Le Monde's reporters of conducting a "destabilisation" operation.

By Georges Marion and Edwy Plenel

HOW WAS Yves Chalier, the principal defendant and plaintiff in the Carrefour du Développement case, able to elude justice for over six months? Why was he found carrying a passport issued in the name of Yves Navaro which had been prepared by the DST? Why was he helped, backed up and advised by French police officers in his flight in Latin America? How and why could a man, today accused of misappropriating public funds, making use of forgeries, breach of trust and theft, benefit from such solidarity?

It is these simple questions, based on precise facts, that magistrates, police officers and journalists are asking as they conduct investigations inquiring into this shady business. Now Charles Pasqua, interviewed on the radio station Europe 1 on Monday, December 15, refused to answer any of them. Yet, by the very fact of his position, the Interior Minister should be able to throw some light on the matter. The "genuine-but-fake" passport was concocted by a DST department. The main police officer accused by Yves Chalier, formerly chief secretary of Cooperation Minister Christian Nucci's ministerial office under the Socialist government, is Jacques Delebois, head of the international police cooperation service who is politically close to Pasqua. Like all his predecessors, the head of the DST, Bernard Gérard, who was appointed to his job after the March 16 general election, is closely dependent on the Minister of the Interior himself.

So Pasqua does not want to say anything. He accepts his responsibilities, but refuses to offer any explanations. His counterattack is contradictory. "If any explanations are to be asked, they must be asked from me and no one else," he retorts, adding immediately: "I have nothing more to say. I, too, am under the obligation of respecting secrecy." When asked about the order sent to the DST to produce a "genuine-but-fake" passport for a man for whom an arrest warrant had been issued, he answered: "The DST did its duty."

Does this mean the DST's duty was to help him flee? Chalier (he confirmed this to the investigating magistrate) has never been a French counter-intelligence operative. Pushed into a corner, the minister said he "didn't know" what the situation was on this particular point: "You know nothing of it and I don't either; it may well be yes, it may well be no..."

Pasqua had only one answer: no, he had not ordered that the passport be issued to Chalier. That is why he announced his intention of suing for libel following Le Monde's publication of its investigation. But — and this is a new paradox — he explained that the DST head "only did his job". In other words, while he refuses to accept responsibility for his subordinate's action, he neither disapproves nor criticises it. Better still, he tags it "a defence secret". But then he would have to tell us where "defence" comes into a case which, until proved otherwise, has nothing to do with spying or terrorism.

Court sources say that Investigating Magistrate Michau is convinced Chalier was helped in his escape by Delebois, who referred the matter to a superior at a very high level, a "top man". That conviction is based on a lengthy hearing of Chalier who gave details of his escapade. His revelations showed the extent of the support Chalier had in his flight and how it was managed.

The passport in question is a key element in the case since it provides the material proof of a link between the fleeing man and the police. All the investigators who have had access to the files have no doubt at all that Gérard had the passport prepared on a request from the Interior Ministry. An oral request, without a trace in writing. An request about which nothing was said to Robert Pandraud, junior Minister responsible for Public Safety and working under Pasqua. The passport was prepared in July and the task was given to the DST's technical subdivision under Jean-Pierre Brut. Though the members of this department who did not know for whom the passport was intended, they nevertheless recognised Chalier from the photo which was passed on to them. They were not particularly upset, but they made a note of it and let the fact be known.

There remains the form, which in this case is also the substance, of the debate that Pasqua has initiated with his customary vigour. He appears to suggest that any journalistic investigation of special services — such as an anti-terrorist unit at the Elysée, the DGSE and the DST — is a "destabilisation" operation. In other words, the public has no right to be told the truth, even part of the truth, about this shadowy world. Untouchable and above suspicion, this world may not be questioned or — how can you avoid adding? — controlled.

Pasqua's counterattack is reminiscent of Charles Hernu's reaction in the Greenpeace case. Confronted by the questions journalists asked and the information they had in their possession, the former Socialist Defence Minister's only answer was to condemn the "treachery" of a campaign attacking the "nuclear chain". In that case either, there was no written proof that a "third team" existed and that Hernu had given the go-ahead for the Rainbow Warrior sabotage. Two realities that nobody questions today. By refusing to offer any explanations, Hernu managed to lose his job.

Is this tendency to feel aggrieved peculiar to the French political class whether of the left or the right? In the light of the public hearings on the "Irangate" scandal in the United States, one is inclined to think so. In the Greenpeace case, the DGSE "destabilised" itself without outside help by being caught red-handed in an unfortunate operation carried out on government orders. In the Carrefour du Développement case, the DST has not however been "destabilised" by a "genuine-but-fake" passport. Several senior officers of this department find fault with their superior, Gérard, for having got them them into this mess through his inexperience. They make no secret of their belief that calm will return to the DST if Gérard reveals to the investigating magistrate a "secret" which is not one of theirs and which has nothing to do with the objectives of their service.

True, the Carrefour du Développment case is primarily a politico-financial scandal. Men have made use of the State's authority in financial deals for private or partisan ends. The scandal has mudded a former Socialist minister and a former presidential adviser. But neither Christian Nucci nor Guy Penne has so far been charged. But Delebois has, because of the determination of a judge, and not at his own request, as he claims.

For the case within the case is as serious. Political officials are suspected of having orchestrated the first scandal, manipulated the plaintiff, offered disclosures to the public in dribs and drabs. They would appear to have utilised their administration, the authority the state confers on them, the secrets and privileges specific to the police and the special services, for partisan purposes.

(December 17)

How the secret service helped a fugitive to escape

By Georges Marion and Edwy Plenel

EVERY DETAIL of the circumstances in which Yves Chalier fled from France early in May this year and went into hiding in Brazil, where he was helped by friends of Controller General Jacques Delebois, has been known since November 21 to the magistrate, Jean-Pierre Michau, who is investigating the Carrefour du Développement case. On November 21, Chalier told the whole story during a hearing that lasted over eight hours in the office of the investigating magistrate.

The report summarising the hearing runs to no less than 23 pages crammed with details and disclosures. The magistrate has not completed checking all its details, but court sources say he is already certain that the flight of the former head of Christian Nucci's ministerial office was in fact engineered from start to finish from Paris by several police officers who kept a "top man" posted on it.

According to the story he told the magistrate, Chalier's troubles began during April 1986 when an investigation initiated at the request of the Cour des Comptes (audit office) revealed the bad management of the Carrefour du Développment association, whose treasurer was Chalier, the head Christian Nucci's ministerial office. Delebois, whose name crops up on almost every page of the hearing summary, did nothing to reassure Chalier. He first told him that the police "unit at the Elysée" was "shadowing" him, then a few days later, that a "contract" had been put out on him.

On April 29, at a meeting arranged in a café at the Place du Trocadéro, Delebois told his friend: "You'll have to go away." And Chalier added: "Delebois told me he had spoken to the big boss and that he could guarantee me a network with Brazil. He gave me the London-to-Rio flight timetable. He also recommended that I didn't sleep at my place."

Was Chalier really in danger or was he merely being manipulated? Nervous, he took the train to Brussels with his girl friend Maggy Baquian and from there flew on to London. Right from his departure for Brussels, he was kept under close observation.

Two men, he said, accompanied him to the Gare du Nord where he took the Trans-Europe Express for the Belgian capital. One of the men was Commander Espinet, a uniformed police officer from the International Police Technical Cooperation Service (SCTIP), of which Delebois was the head. Espinet had done most of his service in French Guiana, where he was recently replaced by Commissaire (roughly superintendent) Lucien Aimé-Blanc. The other man who accompanied him that day was a DGSE officer whose name Chalier refused to reveal to the investigating magistrate. Chalier's two "escorts" were very attentive, even telephoning London from Brussels and booking a room at the Hammersmith Novotel for the fleeing couple.

On May 4, Chalier alone caught the 10:30 pm Varig flight to Rio where next day he arrived at the address he had been given: 1782 Avenida Atlantico, Copacabana. His host, a Delebois contact whose first name was Julien, "manufactures pinball machines". Chalier stayed several weeks at Julien's place, where Delebois telephoned him several times to ask him to write a report on the Carrefour du Développement association.

On May 25, Dr Chiarelli, a friend of Julien's, flew to Paris carrying two envelopes. One contained the famous report, the other photographs of Chalier for making false identity documents as well as a letter intended for Delebois. "In one of his telephone calls," Chalier informed the judge, "Delebois told me Dr Chiarelli would have no problems at Roissy and that someone would be there to meet him." The promise was kept.

Meanwhile in Paris the scandal was growing with revelations appearing in the press. Figaro-Magazine caused a sensation on July 26 by publishing an interview that its reporter Jean-Pax Mefret had with Yves Chalier in Asuncion, Paraguay. Chalier claims the meeting was planned down to the last detail by Jacques Delebois: "Towards the end of June, he told me I should go to Paraguay in July from the 7th to the 15th. He told me I had to give an interview to a journalist and explained that the interview was going to help in negotiations with Guy. I thought he meant Guy Penne (President Mitterrand's former adviser on African affairs). He told me I had to accuse Nucci and say what I knew about Guy Penne."

Following these instructions, Chalier went to Paraguay. He arrived in Asuncion on July 11. "Under my real name," he pointed out. He checked in at the Excelsior Hotel, and later — on Delebois's instructions — at the Guarani Hotel, where at 2 pm on July 15 he met the Figaro Magazine reporter in the hotel lobby. Recognition signals had been prearranged: Mefret showed one of Chalier's photos that had been sent to Paris for making up a false passport.

Returning to Brazil and armed with his false passport, which was brought to him from France by Arnaldo Campana, former police chief of the State of Rio, Chalier got ready to pursue a new career in import-export. But soon, everything went awry. Early in October, Brazilian police, informed by French justice which had succeeded in locating Chalier's hideout — Arnaldo Campana's apartment on the Avenida Otaviano, on the ouskirts of Copacabana and Ipanema — began to get restless.

"On Monday, October 13," Chalier revealed, "someone phoned me to say that Jacques Delebois had seen the minister and there was a risk of the court ordering a rogatory commission in Brazil." Soon, Maggy Baquian was arrested. Chalier became increasingly concerned. Delebois tried to arrange for him to hide out in Paraguay where, he was assured, an apartment had been placed at his disposal. But Chalier would have none of it and decided to return to France and give himself up.

If Chalier's version is to be believed, the police and special service agents covered his escapade for six months — in return for disclosures concerning the activities of a Socialist minister and a presidential adviser. When the investigating magistrate obtained the details of this story, it took him only a fortnight and a few verifications to charge Jacques Delebois.

(December 17)

FREMANTLE — French Kiss, France's entry in the 26th America's Cup challenge, will compete with the first-placed New Zealand in the semi-finals starting on December 28. For the first time in 135 years, there will be no New York Yacht Club entry in the competition, and this despite the syndicate having set up its training base in Fremantle on October 1, 1984 and poured more than $15 million into the venture, with the help of Cadillac and Newsweek magazine, for building three boats which were made available to the young Texan helmsman John Kolius for winning back the world's oldest trophy that it lost to the Australians in 1983. The NYYC entry, America II, was eliminated it finished 15 seconds behind New Zealand on Sunday. Marc Pajot, who skippers French Kiss, which with 129 points was fourth in the last of the preliminary eliminating rounds, talked about the racing.

Eleven Frenchmen show they can become a team

By Gérard Albouy

Question: The preparation and preliminary races of the America's Cup are said to have changed you into a cold monster. Is this true?

Pajot: I'm living through something that is intensely interesting and all-absorbing, but I haven't changed. We finished the first round robin in eighth place and everybody ticked us off severely without trying to find out why.

We've had no experience in this kind of competition racing and most of our training was done in France with a single boat and no partner to run against. Then, in addition, the first few runs were in light weather, which wasn't suitable for French Kiss. It was far from ideal compared with America II or New Zealand, which got a head start by training with the Australians over the course during the past year.

You had doubts then?

Success in competition is often the result of a balance between doubt and confidence in oneself. Doubt is essential in striving for progress. Our team reappraises itself every morning and its great strength has been its capacity to adapt to the problems that have arisen. After the first round robin we told ourselves there were three boats that couldn't be touched and a fourth place in the semi-finals for another was programmed in advance. I have personally always thought so and today we have improved enormously to come up to the level of the four best. There's only one boat against which we feel powerless — New Zealand. But how long will it remain out of reach?

So French Kiss's qualification is just one stage?

It's already a success. At Newport, the Americans used to say: 11 Frenchmen on a 12-metre JI, that's still 11 Frenchmen. Eleven Americans, that's a team. Today, there are men and organisations in France — I think, for example, of the new sailing organisation — to meet the challenge. Qualifying (for the semi-finals) is already a success for all these people, but this is still not our goal. No team here will be satisfied with just qualifying. Our aim is still to win the America's Cup.

Along with the American Dennis Conner and the Australian Ian Murray, you are one of the few skippers to be also manager and helmsman rolled into one. Isn't that presumptuous for a first experience?

To get this venture off the ground in France, a leader was needed in the sailing field to conceive and promote the project. True, we had to work hard on several fronts during two years. But today, everybody has his place in an organisation that is more horizontal than vertical, with units looking after sailing tactics, computer calculations, and financing. From the moment the races started, I have been able to concentrate wholly on the boat and the crew. I shall in due course give my report on this, too, but I believe my organisation has been good.

Were you inspired by men or by principles in accepting this challenge? Like John Bertrand and the Australians in 1983, you would appear to be convinced that from now on victory requires research and innovation.

I hadn't read John Bertrand's book ("And the Kangaroo Downed the Eagle") before I accepted the challenge, but like him I was convinced that one shouldn't follow, but try to innovate. Besides, moving the America's Cup from Newport to Fremantle called all the technical concepts into question. There was of course a risk of making a mistake in the new options, as the Americans did in the case of the Eagle, which wound up trailing last in the classification in spite of having an Olympic helmsman (Rod Davis) and a boat designed by one of the best architects of 12-metre JI class vessels (John Valentijn).

People say I'm methodical, but I function just as much by instinct. Especially in choosing my partners. I met Philippe Briand and Philippe Ricquois who encouraged me to get started. The former, a naval architect and an excellent navigator, was passionately interested in the idea of a 12-metre JI ever since he took part in a Swedish project when he was very young. He agreed to this role, leaving management and navigation up to me. We were perfectly complementary with Philippe Ricquois, who had the job of raising between F65 million and F100 million. And then, it was important to meet Serge Crasnianski, a man who also like a challenge. He needed boldness and flair to trust us two years ago, when Rule 26 had still not been amended and we weren't sure French Kiss would be able to keep its initial name. (Crasnianski is the owner of the trade name Kis which covers an extensive network of franchise shops: keys, shoe repairs and while-you-wait film processing; he is also the developer of a recently marketed cut-rate colour-copying process.)

What do you think of the other semi-finalists?

New Zealand has an undeniable edge especially when sailing close-hauled. With their keel made of composite material, the New Zealand team opted for a solution we had considered with the Beneteau yard, but we couldn't take it any further for lack of time and also perhaps financial means. This wasn't the case with the New Zealanders, who announced an open-ended budget and were moreover on their third boat. If we stay at our present level, we could not think of beating them over seven races, but at the moment we're speaking five engineers are working over here. We meet every morning to consider what we could do after the third round robin.

And the Americans, are they also dangerous?

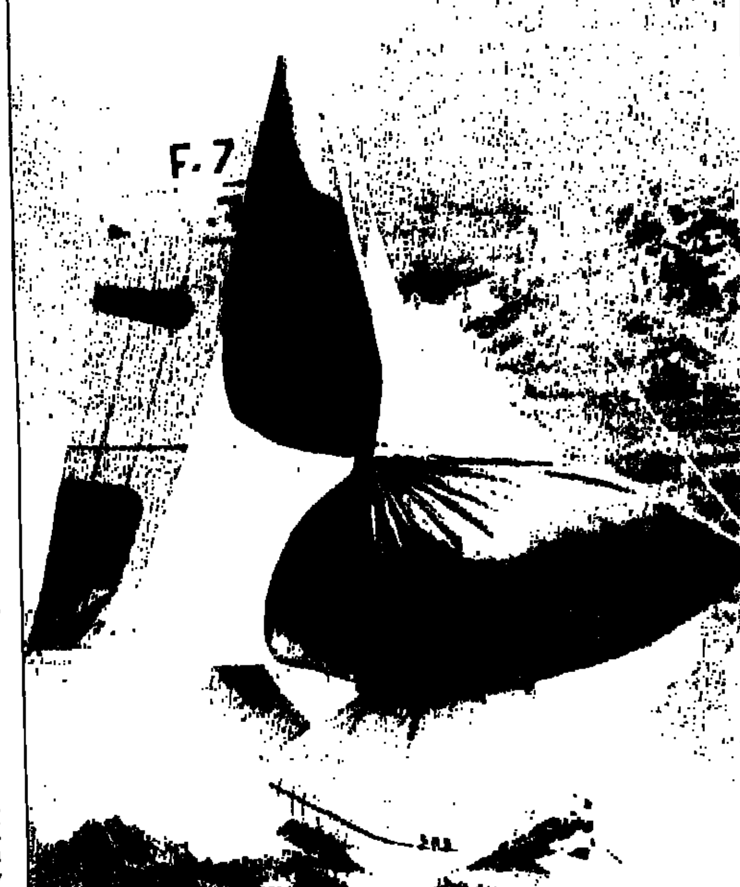
They are the ones with the best potential navigators for this run, especially with their four Olympic gold medallists in the six Olympic series at Los Angeles. The biggest surprise of the round robins was America II's elimination, despite the experience and the enormous organisational machinery of the New York Yacht Club.

Dennis Conner had the fastest boat in the wind up to the second round robin, but since then he has moved forward in light breezes and at healthy speeds. He is ten times more experienced than us, but we've no inhibitions in taking him on.

The first finned keel was brought to public notice with the Australian success in 1983. Will victory in 1987 go to the first 12-metre JI built of composite materials?

It's always easy to generalise, even to focus on a technical aspect. It is far more difficult to analyse men and explain the relationship problems and the psychological pressures generated by a competition such as the America's Cup. The Australians had a very good skipper, a very good crew, very good sails, a very good hull and under that a remarkable finned keel. No doubt the New Zealanders and a few others have the same. The great difficulty of the America's Cup is in analysing and moving forward all these parameters while ensuring that not a single one lags behind.

(December 16)



French Kiss at speed.

Aids vaccine 'experiments' on patients

Continued from page 11

of the experiments: "If it turns out that such experiments are in fact being conducted, then I can assure you it is without the knowledge of the World Health Authority. Besides, I got in touch immediately with the Zairian authorities and asked for clarification."

Apart from Professor Zagury, Kinshasa University's Dr Lurhuma is said to taking part in the work. It is impossible at this stage to say whether the immunisation experiments have been made with the patients' consent. It is obviously a very important point in so far as, once again, one cannot judge beforehand the effectiveness or danger of such a method. The immunisation attempts appear to have been preceded by other experiments at the Villejuif primate centre (on the outskirts of Paris).

In all probability, the results will not be known for several months. Questioned by the New York Times, Dr Zagury is reported to have refused to say anything as he was "under oath to the government of Zaire" not to disclose any information on his research until the results are published in an international scientific journal. The newspaper adds that tests may also have been conducted in a second country.

The ethical questions raised by such testing are obvious. Does one have the right to take the risk of sacrificing people who might have remained seropositive (without actually contracting the disease) for many more years? Were they even told what kind of "treatment" they were being given?

Finally, it has to be said that Dr Zagury's work is far from wholly conclusive, according to the Aids experts to whom I have spoken. At any rate, not conclusive enough for him to take the risk of performing such experiments.

It may be pointed out that other attempts to develop a vaccine have obtained some promising results. Recently, for example, a team headed by Dr Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda succeeded in isolating a protein of the virus membrane which, injected into animals, triggered the growth of antibodies that overwhelmed the virus. This protein fragment, which will probably help in the preparation of a vaccine, will shortly be tested on chimpanzees.

Other teams, including the Pasteur-Vaccin team in France in conjunction with the firm Transgène, are also working on developing such a vaccine.

(December 19)

Women who say it's time to get back in the kitchen

By Michel Castaing

The 19th-century handbook, Bréviaire des Gastronomes, contains the following advice: "The woman cook whom you engage should be neither too young nor too old: be she too old, she will fall asleep; be she too young, her mind will be on other things."

Attitudes to women chefs have certainly changed since then, but not that much — which is why the Association des Restauratrice-Cuisinières (ARC) came into being 11 years ago. Furious at being refused membership of the Société des Cuisiniers simply because they are female, a group of well-known women chefs formed the ARC at the suggestion of Robert Courtine (who writes in Le Monde as La Reynière).

The aims of the association are "to defend and promote women's cooking" and to make known French culinary traditions abroad. Although they keep a lower profile in the media than their male colleagues, ARC members are very well known in international gastronomic circles.

In the last 11 years ARC members have succeeded in breaking down many of the sexist barriers that are rife in the notoriously misogynist world of catering. But they note that many hotel and restaurant owners, under a variety of pretexts, are still reluctant to take on women, and that, when they do, they give them menial serving or cleaning jobs. Some catering schools have ingeniously got round the problem of finding jobs for their graduates: they admit only male pupils.

In a typical case, a male-chauvinist Breton restaurateur agreed to take on as trainees two graduates from a catering school (which admits women) after satisfying himself on paper that they were sufficiently qualified. The two applicants, Dominique X., and Claude Y., duly turned up, but did not have time to unpack their suitcases before being packed off back home by the restaurateur, who had forgotten that "Dominique" and "Claude" are girls' names as well as boys'.

But what exactly is the "cuisine de femme" that the ARC is trying to promote? Has it anything to do with the nouvelle cuisine? To find out, Michel Castaing talked to three active members of the association, Simone Lemaire, its honorary president, and two Paris chefs, Christiane Massia of L'Aquitaine (which specialises in the cuisine of southwest France and has a star in the Michelin Guide) and Marie-Françoise Lachaud of the Breton restaurant Ty Coz.

WERE He still alive, the members of the ARC would no doubt have co-opted the composer Erik Satie, who said: "I love simplicity in art as I do in cuisine." For simplicity is their rallying cry. But tradition is also important. Christiane Massia's menu sets out her credo in black and white: "We have simply consulted our grandmothers, a few fishermen and some old recipe books."

Not surprisingly, nouvelle cuisine finds little favour in the ARC's eyes. Simone Lemaire calls it "spineless and arty", though she is willing to admit, with her friends, that it has had a positive effect by encouraging chefs to give greater importance to vegetables, and to provide lighter, less indigestible fare, notably through such techniques as steaming.

"But I do wish they'd stop inventing new dishes!" she says. "They've overreached themselves. There was a time when people went specially to Fernand Point's restaurant just to sample his foie gras en brioche or Mère Brazier's to enjoy her poularde demi-deuil. It's quite sufficient for one to invent four or five dishes in a lifetime.

"I'm against restaurants that totally change their menus every year. A chef should always have a basic repertoire consisting of dishes he is capable of executing to perfection. That's what customers want — and what makes them come back again and again."

Massia began 20 years ago with only three main courses on her menu. She has since enlarged her palette, but refuses to invent for the sake of inventing. Her grillettes de canard au vinaigre de miel (thin slivers of duck with honey-flavoured vinegar) have a very nouvelle cuisine air about them, but the recipe is a mediaeval one.

"Nouvelle cuisine is terribly labour-intensive," she says. "Think of the way vegetables tend to be served, for example in a pyramid of roundels topped by a solitary pea. You have to remember, too, that the whole structure could only have been put together manually. That's already enough to put me off my food. In my restaurant, once food is cooked it is never touched by human hand."

Marie-Fraçoise Lachaud admits that nouvelle cuisine chefs make food look decorative on the plate, but wishes the portions were not so pocket-sized: "One shouldn't be forced to order a dessert because one is still hungry."

What, in their opinion, are the other other distinguishing marks of women's cuisine? "It's less aggressive: women prefer to cook at lower temperatures and are less fond of grilling and flambéing." They are more interested in spontaneity and naturalness than in aesthetic considerations, more concerned to convince and to please than to bask in their own glory. "When a male chef sees customers to the door at the end of a meal," says Lemaire, "he's wondering if they think he's a good cook. A woman chef will be asking herself if they're satisfied and contented."

Women chefs — and especially those celebrated guardians of local culinary traditions, the "mères lyonnaises" — have ensured the survival of regional cooking. Lachaud, who gets all her produce direct from Brittany, is the fourth in line of professional women cooks who handed down their regional recipes from generation to generation. "My great-grandmother used to cater for local high society. In those days, you entertained at home, not in restaurants. She used to do all the cooking for vast numbers of guests."

Massia has a particularly long list of suppliers, and not just in southwest France. She gets her baby monkfish from Brittany, tiny asparagus from the Vosges, and wild leeks and fairy ring mushrooms from other parts of the country.

"As far as the vegetables I've just mentioned are concerned," she says, "they are things you can't get hold of through normal catering channels. But they enable one to keep alive certain old regional recipes of the kind that are all too often looked down on by men. Most male chefs would feel it beneath their dignity to make, for instance, a farci poitevin (a kind of stuffed cabbage)."

The two watchwords of the ARC, simplicity and tradition, do not prevent women cooks from being inventive, even if world-famous chef Paul Bocuse once claimed (he has apparently since changed his mind) that women show "no imagination in the kitchen".

Christiane Massia does not care, anyway: "I try to appeal to the taste buds and the belly, not to the imagination, with straightforward, rustic, but nevertheless magical words like fricassée, blanquette, matelote, marmite, potée and so on. And something cooked 'en cocotte' is somehow appetising, isn't it?"

Colette once said: "There is no point in taking up cooking unless you are capable of a little witchcraft." But too much verbal incantation can be a bad thing: women chefs seem much more willing than their male counterparts to go for simplicity not only in the kitchen but in the way they formulate their menus.

Simone Lemaire gave me some examples: "A woman will propose a salad with croutons", a man "a little autumn salad with hazelnut oil and toasted country bread". A woman will call a salad of pheasant and lentils by its name, a man will doll it up as "lentil salad with pheasant aiguillettes dressed with vinegared olive oil". Surely most people know what a crouton is — or that a salad contains oil and vinegar?" Massia once saw a preposterously named dish which ended with the words: "with toast in a napkin".

At opposite poles to this extreme literalness, but just as bad, is an over-mysterious and esoteric approach aimed at aweing customers or making them feel important. "Some menus call starters 'gustatory prefaces'," says Lachaud. "I've nothing against a bit of humour, though. I once called called a dish 'haddock du Capitaine' (a reference to the Hervé comic-strip character Tintin's friend). But I don't like grand-sounding names unless they are simply designed to explain the ingredients of a dish to customers, so they don't have to ask the waiter. That's a form of dialogue, if you like. But most of the time, pretentious names aim simply to disguise the banality of what is on offer."

Simone Lemaire put the whole problem in a nutshell: "Nowadays a lot of young chefs write out their menus before they've even learnt how to cook."

Committee sets new guidelines for 'test-tube births'

A THREE-YEAR MORATORIUM on genetic manipulation of human embryos, proposed by the Comité National d'Ethique (national committee on ethics) has been accepted by the government. The announcement was made by Health Minister Michèle Barzach when she opened the committee's annual meeting last week.

When it is the very future of the human species that is at stake, everything cannot be permitted in the name of medical and scientific research. We have to be able to call a halt while we evaluate the consequences of such research.

This is the fundamental conclusion of the major opinion expressed by the Comité National d'Ethique, a consultative body headed by Professor Jean Bernard. An opinion which had long been in the making; one cam easily understand how its drafting had been accompanied by sharp debates within the committee itself.

The 23-page text published last week is the lengthiest opinion so far submitted by the committee. It examines first most of the issues raised by in vitro fertilisation, the donation and preserving of human embryos. It also ventures a series of proposals concerning research that (according to the Committee members) may or may not be carried out on human embryos, and spells out what research is permitted and what should be banned, as well as what should be subject to a moratorium.

The committee also defines the guidelines to be observed by the government in setting up future medical centres which will be authorised to conduct such research under the two categories of in vitro fertilisation and embryo donation and preservation.

While acknowledging that in vitro fertilisation and embryo transplants constitute an "acceptable procreative technique", the committee considers it advisable not to resort excessively to "an uncertain, complicated and expensive technique which is not without physical, especially psychological, risks for couples. The committee, in particular, draws the attention of the medical profession and potential patients to the dangers of relentlessly pursuing procreative practices."

"The medical requirements for resorting to in vitro fertilisation and embryo preservation and transplants," says the committee, "concern only couples suffering from sterility or recognised hypofecundity . . ."

What is to be done with "surplus embryos": that is embryos derived from in vitro fertilisation for which no nurturing uteruses are immediately available? Can they be destroyed? "The committee considers such destruction may be considered only as a least harmful option and that it becomes inevitable when conservation is not possible. Such destruction is upsetting to all those who consider the embryo's life ought to be protected from the moment of fertilisation."

Should such embryos then be frozen? Yes, the committee says, provided certain precautions are taken. Preservation is acceptable only when it is carried out at authorised centres. It is justifiable only to the extent that it increases the percentage of success of the technique (transplantation of embryos at a subsequent menstrual cycle, repeated transplantations in case of failure).

There should be a time limit on how long an embryo may be preserved, the committee believes. "Except on medical grounds, preservation should not be prolonged beyond a maximum period of 12 months from the time of fertilisation. The medical reasons for any prolongation should be examined by the ethics committee."

By Jean-Yves Nau

More generally, some committee members consider that "the idea of an embryo bank subject to independent control or the uncertainties of parental inclinations should be rejected. It would be unwise for preservation to gradually become an autonomous means of procreation."

Should embryo donations be permitted? In the committee's opinion, there is no law at present to regulate such donations that involve the problems of ova and sperm donations. Nothing at the present stage permits answering the legal questions that could arise concerning parentage in such cases. The committee therefore expresses the hope that legal rules be drawn up before the donation of embryos to other couples is considered. And it emphasises the urgent necessity of stepping in before a black market in embryos develops.

Fertilisation carried out solely for the purpose of producing embryos for research purposes is banned. But the committee thinks that donating surplus embryos for research may be tolerated so long as this is "strictly controlled". As an example, it recommends that no embryos more than seven days old be made available for research.

The committee also recommends a moratorium on "research aimed at carrying out genetic diagnoses (chromosomal, gene and sex diagnoses) before transplantation . . ." Despite the reservations that some of its members had voiced about the very principle of a moratorium, the committee considered after much heart-searching that the moratorium was just as necessary for ethical as for medical and scientific reasons.

"This research," it says, "has brought to light the risk of seeing the development of eugenic practices which, by becoming trivialised, could give rise to ethically reprehensible desires to regulate human reproduction for reasons of health or suitability . . . The temptation to choose the child to be born in terms of its qualities can appear contrary to the dignity of the unborn child, for it calls into question the respect for the child's uniqueness, specificity and freedom."

The committee has set a three-year limit on the moratorium, a period which it hopes will enable researchers to better pinpoint the consequences of genetic research — research involving the removal of micro-particles of cells or embryonic nuclei and the analysis of the genetic characteristics of such cells.

It has also drawn up a list of research areas which it thinks should be banned. They concern in particular all research aimed at artificially modifying human genes which are handed down from generation to generation; research aimed at transplanting embryos between man and animal; research towards making male pregnancy possible; and research on parthenogenesis or full in vitro gestation.

Examining the question of female egg preservation, the committee considered the unknown factors involved here are such that they forbid the transplantation of embryos obtained by this technique.

(December 16)



The Washington Post

Ronald Reagan — A Political Obituary

WHEN President Reagan rededicated the Statue of Liberty in a blaze of light and celebratory fireworks last July 3, he seemed to personify the American nation, which he described that night in Lincoln's words as "hope for the world, future for all time."

In a week of tall ships and remembrances of patriots past, Reagan captured the imagination of a nation accustomed to his heroic turn of phrase and reassuring ways. A romanticized portrait of Reagan appeared on the cover of Time magazine the following week accompanied by a caption that asked, "Why is this man so popular?" The cover story described Reagan as "a Prospero of American memories, a magician who carries a bright, ideal America like a holograph in his mind and projects its image in the air."

All the glitter is gone now, all the magic lost.

"People had this heroic image of Reagan in their minds — a Reagan who quips when he is shot and stands up to the Russians," says a Republican student of the presidency. "Everything about the Iran arms deal seems both un-American and un-Reagan. Dealing with the people who burned our flag. Deceiving the American people. Helping the Ayatollah. It didn't fit with the American image of Reagan. In academic terms it was cognitive dissonance in the extreme."

The betrayal seemed greater because the betrayer was Reagan, who had spent 50 years insinuating himself into the national consciousness as a believable character who was America's best version of itself. Reagan was identified with baseball, football and Hollywood. He was "The Gipper" who gave his life for Notre Dame and country, a governor who stood up to rioting students, a president who restored the nation's patriotic identity and celebrated heroism.

Then the symbolmaster threw it all away in an escapade so preposterous in it premises and implications that Hollywood would never have accepted the script. The president who had promised that America would "never again" bow to dictators or yield to terrorism was revealed as doing secret business with the representatives of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Suddenly, superimposed on the blaze of light with which Ronald Reagan had illuminated the Statue of Liberty was a remembered image of a burning American flag in Tehran.

Now that Ronald Reagan has been restored to human dimensions, what do we make of his presidency? What lessons does the man who only a few months ago seemed to have discovered a new way of governing still have to teach us? Most important, what lessons can we learn from Reagan's fall? Was he a victim of an out-of-control NSC staff? Has he suffered from bad political advice and the wrong chief of staff? Is age simply catching up with him and dulling his once-sharp political judgment? Or has this most favored of presidents simply been suffering recently from a run of bad luck?

Before his presidency was overwhelmed by the Iran arms scandal and its offshoots, Reagan appeared to have discovered a secret of leadership that had eluded his White House predecessors. Three out of four Americans approved of the job they thought Reagan was doing as president, and even some of his harshest policy critics extolled his style. After Reagan was reelected in a 49-state landslide in 1984, House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill said to him, "In my 50 years of public life, I've never seen a man more popular than you are with the American people."

The popularity seemed unassailable and Reagan exempt from the laws of political gravity. Reagan periodically misstated facts at news conferences, forgot the names of trusted aides and Cabinet officers and explained some of his most cherished policies in private meetings by reading off 3-by-5 cards. Nothing seemed to touch him, an observation codified in the phrase "Teflon president," which described the Reagan phenomenon without explaining it.

Politicians and journalists alike were frustrated by the love affair between Reagan and the American people. They asked one another how a president who knew so little could be valued so highly. Columnist Edwin M. Yoder Jr. expressed the feelings of many of his peers when he confessed early in 1984 that it was "a mystery" to him how "this nice, eupeptic, uninstructed, rather dogmatic gentleman should now be a huge success in the presidency."

Reagan's knowledge of foreign affairs was particularly sketchy, as Reagan's longtime California advisers recognized. When one of these advisers, William P. Clark, became national security adviser in 1982, he demonstrated his understanding of Reagan's learning habits by showing him government movies about world trouble spots.

Reagan also watched movies during his weekends at Camp David and learned from them, after a fashion. In 1983, he amused and encouraged a group of pro-arms control congressmen who met with him at the White House by interrupting a serious discussion with praise for "War Games," an anti-war film about how a high school computer wizard taps into a national-defense computer system and nearly triggers a nuclear war.

No one seemed to care that Reagan knew so little. The Jimmy Carter crowd, still seeking to blame the rejection of their leader on something other than Carter, contended that the media had gone soft on Reagan. But as the list of Reagan's published inanities grew, so did his standing in the polls. Surveys taken for the White House found that many Americans knew that Reagan was ill-informed, and disagreed with a number of his policies, but nonetheless approved of the job he was doing as president.

Americans were forgiving of Reagan's perceived shortcomings because his policies seemed to work. Inflation had slowed dramatically, and for most Americans, times were relatively good. No Americans were involved in a shooting war. Most of all, Americans desperately wanted — as Tip O'Neill had pointed out soon after Reagan's election — a president who would succeed, after a recent history of assassination, resignation and failure.

Even when Reagan committed gaffes of international proportions, he seemed immune from accountability. On Aug. 11, 1984, while doing a sound check for his weekly radio speech from a makeshift studio at his California ranch, Reagan said, "My fellow Americans, I am pleased to tell you I have signed legislation to outlaw Russia forever. We begin bombing in five minutes." Soviet commentators used the incident to portray Reagan as a warmonger, and Democrats cited it as an example of his irresponsibility. Reagan brushed off what might have been a monumental embarrassment for any other president by saying that the media should never have reported it.

Six weeks after this incident, Washington Post national political correspondent David S. Broder was interviewing prospective voters in the 1984 political campaign in Detroit. Among those he interviewed was a 25-year-old man who believed that Reagan "sides with the special interests" while his opponent, Walter F. Mondale, "sides with the average citizen." The young man's companion, a 23-year-old Michigan State University student, agreed and said she also believed that Mondale was "more likely to keep the United States out of war." The surprise part of the interview was that both of these young Americans were voting for Reagan.

By Lou Cannon

Millions of traditionally Democratic working people and young people also deserted their party to vote for Reagan, after a campaign that was a triumph of symbolism. Reagan avoided the press, staggered through two debates with Mondale and raised no new issues. While Mondale talked about raising taxes, Reagan wrapped himself in the flag and encouraged voters to identify him with America.

The identification seemed natural enough to those who heard the president's soaring, empty, symbolic speeches. "We want to talk about the present and the future, about what Americans are doing together, and what we must continue to do to make America great again and let the eagle soar," Reagan said in one of his opening campaign speeches on Sept. 3, 1984.

Americans accepted the "bright, ideal America" that Reagan carried in his mind in part because he shared with them the credit for achieving it. Reagan had a wonderful trick of taking what people assumed to be his own strengths and attributing them to his audience. "We've come a long way since those days of malaise," he would say, giving his audiences credit for the tax cuts and military spending increases that were the principal legislative products of the Reagan years. The president rarely mentioned the $2 trillion deficit that was a byproduct of these achievements.

In person Reagan was modest, gentle, unassuming. "Unlike a number of his predecessors who . . . craved the presidency in order to be something, Reagan ran for president in order to do something," wrote columnist Mark Shields. "His sense of self-worth does not hinge on his riding on Air Force One."

Nor did Reagan take for granted the unusual bond he had forged with Americans during five decades of acting, broadcasting and campaigning. He seemed to understand the secret of his strength. On the eve of the 1980 election, when a reporter asked what it was that Americans saw in him, Reagan replied, "Would you laugh if I told you that I think, maybe, they see themselves and that I'm one of them? I've never been able to detach myself or think that I, somehow, am apart from them."

Presidential historian Richard Neustadt believes that it was the combination of Reagan's reassuring optimism, self-deprecatory qualities and ability to strike the right note in ceremonial speeches that made him appealing to Americans. "I think we underestimate how much Americans want their president to be presidential," says Neustadt. "People are still hungry for a king. . . . It wasn't the legislative achievements of the first New Deal that established Roosevelt, it was the psychological turnaround. And Reagan is very Rooseveltian in this sense."

But Neustadt also realizes, unlike Reagan, that there is no magic secret to governing. While he believes that Reagan's first-term political team would have saved him from the Iran scandal, Neustadt also says, "I always knew there was a price to pay for his style of management. . . . I just didn't know what it was."

Because Reagan understood symbolic realities so well, it seems surprising that he miscalculated the impact of the secret arms deal on American public opinion. But there are those who believe that the symbolic collapse was the inevitable result of growing policy gridlock and Reagan's frustration at his lack of success in freeing American hostages held by groups he had described as "terrorists."

In addition, a number of administration officials believe that Reagan's revolving door of national security advisers — now up to five in less than six years — and an NSC staff weakened by ideology and infighting was a disaster waiting to happen.

In the political community, the conventional wisdom is that Reagan's fall flowed inevitably from the substitution of businessman Donald T. Regan for politician James A. Baker III as White House chief of staff. Richard Darman, widely considered Reagan's brightest policy adviser, left for Treasury with Baker. Five months later, in May 1985, Reagan's friend and longtime public relations specialist Michael K. Deaver left the White House staff and Reagan was left without a seasoned political adviser at close hand.

"There has always been this lights, camera, action quality about Reagan," says a longtime adviser. "He played a role and counted on others for the political expertise as, in Hollywood, he had counted on others for direction. His role was to sell his programs. After Baker and Deaver left, the president was surrounded by businessmen and military men who were used to giving orders and having others follow them. They didn't give orders to the commander in chief, but they did prevent others from advising him."

Others say — usually in whispered voices — that Reagan is slipping. At 75, he tires more easily and asks even fewer questions of aides than he did three or four years ago. His hearing has declined. He still gets himself up for the big ceremonial performances, as he did on Liberty Weekend, but he is said to be increasingly preoccupied and under strain. "He always enjoyed being president," says a friend. "I don't think he finds it fun anymore."

A case also can be made that the Reagan administration was out of gas even before the arms deal was disclosed. Selling arms to the Ayatollah was a symbolic disaster, but there are diplomats within the administration who believe that Reagan's confused summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland, was a greater policy failure. In a confused discussion with Gorbachev which he has since summarizd in conflicting ways, Reagan almost casually proposed the elimination of all ballistic nuclear missiles — undercutting U.S. allies in Britain and West Germany. The Thatcher government may yet be a casualty of Reagan's excursion into an unprepared summit with Gorbachev — something that Reagan had promised he would never do.

"Reagan got away with Reykjavik in the sense that he was able to present it to the American people as a success," says an administration official. "For the president it was consistent symbolism, even if dubious policy. What could be more American than saying, 'Let's settle our differences by talking . . . by ridding the world of these terrible weapons.'"

Even without the Iran-contra scandal, however, there is concern within the administration and among U.S. allies that Reykjavik may have been the end of Reagan's arms control efforts, rather than a beginning.

On domestic issues, except for the possibility of enacting a program of catastrophic health insurance, there is even less optimism within the administration. A recent list of tepid initiatives compiled by Regan and announced by the president devotes a single line to deficit reduction. Such yawners as budget reform, world climate control and a North American patent office are other items on the burners these days of what used to be called "the Reagan revolution."

That "revolution" ended on Election Day 1986 when Republicans lost the Senate after Reagan's personal campaigning failed to save weak GOP candidates in a number of key western and southern states. It was an event said to have shocked First Lady Nancy Reagan, who had been told that her husband's strenuous campaigning could save the Senate for his party.

On that same day, Nov. 3, the first revelations appeared in American newspapers of the secret visit to Iran of former national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane and Lt. Col. Oliver L. North. It was the first of many disclosures that signified the dark symbolic end of a Reagan presidency that less than six months ago was bathed in the glow of Lady Liberty's light.

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The Washington Post

The Reagan Presidency Is Disintegrating

THE ARGUMENT about whether the Iranian affair is comparable to Watergate is at best a diversion and at worst a trap. It is a trap because the analogy is false and may even induce a kind of complacency since it would suggest that the current troubles of the administration are in a relatively early stage — the equivalent, say, of March 21, 1973 — and that there is much time for the thing yet to play out. But there isn't time. The most interesting — and distinctive and alarming — fact about this crisis is that it has reached so advanced a state so quickly.

It is hard to remember a time, except for the very last days of the Nixon presidency, when the uppermost reaches of a government were in such disarray. Yes, we know: "disarray" is one of those newspaper words, used often enough to disparage a situation that we in the press helped to create. But that is not the case here. The word is apt. The president and the vice president, the White House chief of staff and other staff members, the affected Cabinet members and presidential counselors and intimates seem not to represent any kind of a whole at all, any entity, any "we" (as in, "this is what we have to do now"). They evidently do not share the same interpretation, or in some critical cases even similar interpretations, of what happened, of whether it was right or wrong, of what should come next. There is much high-level knifework. There is much debilitating anxiety and uncertainty. Life rafts are being readied.

Leaving aside for the moment his own ultimate responsibility for what goes on in his administration, the president has been badly served from the first in all this. He has been sent out to speak with factually false material, provided him by briefers who evidently were so busy trying to make their own case to him that they didn't have time to worry about the case he was going to make to the public. He has been given rotten advice, and he has been sycophantically encouraged in his impulse to believe the thing is overblown and will go away. His advisers have not been brave or unsparing or skeptical enough. The president has been defending them — defending some of the people who have done him the most harm. They should have been defending him.

The people we are referring to here are not those currently being called "disloyal" by some at the White House. It is one of the ironies of this whole awful drama that an argument is raging over loyalty to the president, but that the very concept of loyalty and its obligations has been inverted so that those who are trying merely to ingratiate themselves with the president are said to be loyal, while those who believe the error of the policy must be acknowledged and repaired are castigated as disloyal. The ones who got him in this trouble, who exceeded their instructions, who used idiotic judgment, who now refuse to talk and/or refuse to leave are the "loyal" ones under this construction. The ones who dare to say no are renegades.

Two things are desperately needed. One is as full an account as can possibly be produced of this affair, from start to finish. The other is the *restoration of the president's political authority, within his government* and in relation to the country and the world. Only he can manage this. It will begin with credible evidence that he understands the magnitude of the error and that he intends to rectify it. He needs to be seen taking charge of his government. He needs a White House chief of staff who does not have a personal interest that is at odds with his own. He needs to work with such a person to establish some degree of common purpose and mutual respect within the top ranks of his government. It is lacking now.

Ronald Reagan's government is coming apart, and he is the only one who can put it back together. Blaming the press, the political opposition, the people in government who had the wit to oppose the disastrous course will not do him any good. If he wants to take it out on them he should save the pleasure for later. Right now he has more urgent things to do."

A Funeral In Hong Kong

By Simon Winchester
Special to The Washington Post

HONG KONG — The British Empire has buried one of its last chieftains in a classically imperial way, far from home, to the beat of muffled drums and the sound of dirges.

Sir Edward Youde, GCMG, GCVO, MBE, the kindly, self-effacing Welshman who until his sudden death in Peking had enjoyed the title of His Excellency the 26th Governor of the Crown Colony of Hong Kong, was borne up the nave of the Cathedral Church of St. John here by 10 soldiers from the Coldstream Guards.

No matter that the old church to which he had been taken is now all but hidden among the gleaming skyscrapers of the new Hong Kong: at the funeral, all the old and venerable props of empire were on show, perhaps for the very last time. There were judges in their scarlet robes, there were soldiers and sailors with plumes and sashes and swords, there were medals and decorations and anthems and slow-marches and two 17-gun salutes.

"We British do these things so well," someone said from the pew behind.

"Perhaps funerals are all we're any good at," her companion glumly replied.

Hong Kong has reason enough to feel glum these days, and not only because 6 million subjects have suddenly lost their British governor. For one thing, the superstitious, and those who follow the Chinese geomancy known as fung shui, are making much of the circumstances of Sir Edward's passing.

He was the first governor ever to die in office. He died up in Peking, which many still think of as the enemy capital. He died while he was on Hong Kong business — indeed, it looks as though he died from the very rigors of that business. And he died on the unpropitious fourth of the month — the Cantonese sound for the number four being homophonic with the Cantonese word for death. Very bad fung shui, the magic men say, with consequent ill luck to come.

But the governor's passing and the potency of the astrological consequences of his having done so are not the only causes of the present peculiar colonial distemper. Even when the black crepe has gone and the union flag is back at full staff over Government House, perhaps even when a new governor has taken over — even then the colony looks likely to continue to suffer this curiously rudderless, oddly abandoned feeling.

No one can pinpoint exactly when it started. It has been growing, old hands say, during this past year, ever since Margaret Thatcher went to Peking and signed the colony away, agreeing to hand it back, as had been promised, to the communist Chinese. There are just 10 more British years left, and everyone here is counting.

It is unfashionable, and unwise, to be publicly pessimistic. On the surface, all looks well, "Never been better, old boy," they'll tell you in a dozen board rooms. Most company profits are nicely up. Property prices are healthy. The discotheques are full, the Beaujolais nouveau is in the shops, the Rolls-Royce distributors are about to sell their 700th car (there are only 14 rickshaws). On the surface, Hong Kong is very much the Georgetown of South China, the epicenter of upward mobility in a very upwardly mobile region.

But privately, and beneath the surface, it is not difficult to confront the malaise.

People talk more openly now about leaving, going off to get new passports, getting their money out to safer lands. The lines at the American and Canadian and Australian consulates are depressingly long. Fiji and Belize have their passports on offer, for a small sum in folding money. People are not wondering whether they should go, but when, and which is the year when it's all going to go wrong.

An Indian friend, a multi-millionaire, explained the other day how he was selling one of his properties and putting the cash into short-term investment, "and then taking everything out by 1992." The head of one of the larger financial institutions here said most of his money was already in Switzerland, or in diamonds, ready to go.

There is a very distinct feeling here that we are all standing on a bridge that may be about to collapse. No one wants to start a stampede, because then it very definitely will collapse. No one wants to be seen to be trying to get off, because that would start a stampede. So people are sidling off quietly, edging away, and hoping that no one will notice them.

Sometimes the signs are more obvious than this. A survey of investors' likely confidence 10 years from now — though how can they tell? skeptics aid with scorn — places Hong Kong somewhere near the bottom of the list. Another foreign bank moved its operations out of the colony week before last. One of the British firms that helped found the place reorganized itself, and, by dint of some adroit accountancy, took some of itself off to the more evidently stable — and still British — climes of Bermuda.

And now there's one even odder whisper.

Some of the Shanghainese here — and it is well to remember that many of the really smart businessmen in Hong Kong are refugees from Shanghai — also say they are considering leaving Hong Kong, not to go to San Francisco or Sydney, but to return to Shanghai. They say that with China changing so fast, a rich man can easily manipulate the system to his own advantage, and stay rich. If that's true, they say to themselves, then why not go home?

I was in Shanghai recently, and confess I did not manage to find a refugee from down south. But their colleagues here say they are there and that others are readying themselves to come.

It would be idle and profitless to suggest that Hong Kong is falling apart. It isn't — far from it. But it would be equally idle to deny that there is a strange smell about the place, an uneasiness. The feeling has been compounded, no doubt, by Sir Edward's funeral, and by the sad rituals of farewell. For the colonials here know that Britain itself will be saying farewell soon, and some of the more glum types realize that the ceremony up at St. John's Cathedral, magnificent as it was melancholy, was only an unexpected practice run for the final goodbye 10 years from now.

Did They Lie About Libya, Too?

Richard Cohen

ON APRIL 14, U.S. warplanes bombed Libya, killed 37 persons, among them a 15-month-old girl named Hana, reportedly Moammar Gadhafi's adopted daughter. The attack was in reprisal for the bombing days earlier of a West German discotheque frequented by U.S. servicemen. One was killed.

Following the disco bombing, Bob Woodward of the Washington Post reported what the President had alluded to: The United States had intercepted messages from the Libyan Embassy in East Germany telling Libyan authorities that they "will be very happy when you see the headlines tomorrow." Case closed.

But is it? At the time, President Reagan seemed to personify the American rage at Gadhafi. The Libyan leader had exulted in the deaths of innocents in massacres at the Rome and Vienna airports and had reportedly financed several terrorist operations. The administration's case seemed convincing and its reprisal, really an act of war, seemed above moral reproach. Few quibbled when the President called Gadhafi the "mad dog of the Middle East."

Since the spring, though, much has changed. Libya, no matter what its sins, seems almost inconsequential compared to the real thugs of the Middle East. In two separate trials — one in London, the other in West Berlin — Syria was implicated in two terrorist incidents. The first was the attempt to place a bomb on an El Al plane heading to Israel by way of London. The second was the bombing of the German-Arab Friendship Society in Berlin that injured 14 persons. No mention of Libya was made at either trial.

By playing cute with the American people . . . the Reagan administration has weakened the fibre of the very democracy it was trying to protect.

The American people now know, also, that some of the case against Libya consisted of "disinformation" leaked by the administration and unwittingly published by the press. We know, too, that it was not Libya that controlled the fate of American hostages in Lebanon, but Iran. We were also told in a report by the Miami Herald, that U.S. officials held Iran responsible for the bombing of both the Marine barracks and the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. In both incidents, the loss of life was horrendous.

Cynicism is the rust of democracy. One of the truly awful implications of the current Iran/contra scandal is that we can not believe our own government. The list of lies — and they are that — is getting longer and longer, and foremost among them was the repeated declaration that the United States would never pay ransom for hostages. We did just that and did is repeatedly.

Another lie was that if the United States possessed hard information that other countries were engaged in terrorism, they would get a dose of what Libya got. "We have made it plain that if we have the same kind of irrefutable evidence with regard to other countries, they'll be subject to the same treatment," the President said on May 7. The information linking Iran to the kidnappers of American hostages was so irrefutable that we traded arms for their release.

When it comes to information — irrefutable or otherwise — I have none to contradict what the President said following the bombing of Libya. But as one who approved of that raid, I have the sinking feeling that I was in some sense taken — that the administration arbitrarily substituted Libya for Iran when, following the hijacking of a TWA flight to Beirut, it realized that Tehran and not Tripoli was the real paymaster of Middle East terrorists.

Maybe we bombed Libya because it, almost alone among terrorist nations, was not holding American hostages. Or maybe Gadhafi lost a daughter because we were attempting to send a message not to him — but to the Ayatollah: In violation of our own laws, we might try to assassinate a foreign leader.

I don't know. I do know that I no longer have the confidence in our government I once had. And I have to tell you that I had to ask Woodward, an extremely careful and savvy reporter, if his story about the Berlin to Tripoli intercepts was not itself the rotten fruit of a disinformation campaign. He did not think so. He said he had confidence in his sources, but acknowledged that the Iran disclosures had to raise some doubts. No one has the same confidence in administration statements they once had.

Cynicism — not any foreign-policy setback — may well be the worst consequence of the current scandal. By playing cute with the American people, by saying one thing and doing another and by using "disinformation," the Reagan administration has weakened the fiber of the very democracy it was trying to protect. On April 14, the United States killed a child named Hana. Once I thought the bombing that caused her death was justified. Now I am not so sure. Are you?

William Raspberry adds: A New York Times/CBS Poll finds that nearly half the people think Ronald Reagan is lying. We're not talking impressions of "misrepresentation" or some perceived failure to tell the "whole truth." No, the question was whether the people thought the President was "telling the truth" or "lying" when he said he hadn't known that money from the Iranian arms sales was going to the contras.

Forty-seven percent of the respondents said they thought he was "lying." Furthermore, 51 percent said the "worst" aspect of the whole "contragate" affair is the administration's handling of the facts.

Goya: Mystery And Mastery

By Paul Richard

HIS eyes are black, his face is round, his body is compact. Polished silver twinkles on the table by his easel. Goya, who was humbly born but changed his name to hide the fact, loved golden coins and jewels, all the shiny signs of wealth. His confessional self-portrait shows an artist on the make.

Two hundred years ago, just before he painted it, he sent a note of triumph to a loyal boyhood friend. *"Marti'n mi'o,"* crowed the artist, *"ya soy Pintor del Rey con qunice mil reales!"* — ("Martin boy, now I'm King's Painter with [a yearly salary of] 15,000 reales!")

These are Goya days in Washington. "Goya" — Gian Carlo Menotti's opera — received its world premiere at the Kennedy Center, and to celebrate its opening two Washington museums, the Corcoran and National Galleries, have mounted Goya shows.

The master was still climbing when he painted the self-portrait now on exhibition at the National Gallery of Art. His cockiness is clear. His *machismo* is apparent. He wears the short embroidered jacket, the slippers and the tights, of a Spanish *majo*, a sort of 18th-century urban cowboy. It is the sort of costume strutting bullfighters still wear — except for the odd hat.

He had it made of metal so that it would not burn when, painting after sunset, he set candles on its brim.

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (the *de*, an affectation, implied ties to the nobility that were tenuous at best) was born, a gilder's son, on March 30, 1746 in Aragon, in Spain. He died an exile in France in 1828. He was two artists in one.

While the public Goya painted gracious, formal portraits of the highborn and the rich, another sort of master was developing within him. This second, private Goya cared nothing for the brilliant chatter of the court. Instead he hewed his visions out of silence and the dark. No painter of his era was as attuned as he was to the shivering shadows, the witches and the truths and the horrors of the night.

"Goya: Selected Prints From the Collection of the Arthur Ross Foundation," a show of more than 60 lithographs and etchings, is at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. "Goya: The Condesa de Chinchón and Other Paintings, Drawings and Prints From Spanish and American Private Collections and the National Gallery of Art" is at the gallery's West Building. Together these exhibits, they rarely overlap, suggest the strange range of his art.

The Menotti opera hymns his legend and his supposed love life. His often bitter pictures tell vastly more about his despairs and disgusts, his nightmares and his hates. He lived through times of slaughter, famine and repression. He saw the armies of Napoleon battle throughout Spain. And from his nearly fatal breakdown in 1792 until his death in 1828, the painter of whom Placido Domingo sings was completely deaf.

Goya was near 50, and had already lost his hearing, when he first met the Duchess of Alba, the opera's other star. He first painted her portrait in 1795. What she thought of the deaf painter is a matter of conjecture. That he fell for her is clear.

She was willful and eccentric, passionate, demanding. She ringed herself with actors, bullfighters and painters. She affected *maja* styles — and, in fact, may well have posed for Goya's famous portraits in the Prado of the "Maja Nude" and the "Maja Clothed." Her lusciousness is not in doubt. Every hair of her head excited desire, a French traveler reported. Goya, for a while — but only for a while — fell under her spell.

"He gave her," writes historian Gwyn A. Williams, "his most harrowing self-portrait, and in his house kept the magnificent portrait of her he painted under the Andalusian sun, in her black *maja* dress, wearing two rings inscribed *Alba* and *Goya*, and pointing to her feet where are traced the words *Solo Goya* (later carefully overpainted by him)." Like that declaration, his love was writ in sand.

One 1799 etching from Goya's *Caprichos* ("Caprices") attacks her without mercy. It shows her flying through the air, as inconstant as a butterfly, as unholy as a witch, with "an escort," notes Williams, "of literally hagridden bullfighters." The painter's angers and affections wrestle in his art.

Goya's *Los Desastres de la Guerra* ("The Disasters of War") of 1810-20 — selected etchings from that series are on view at both museums — condemn man's inhumanity with a fervor rarely equaled in the history of art. And yet he portrayed atrocities with a kind of fascination. Pain and blood and violence did not entirely upset him; he once said he liked hunting better than painting. That he loved the bullfight, too, is abundantly apparent in the *La Tauromaquia* etchings on the history of the sport, which he published in 1816.

By the standards of his Spain, Goya was a liberal. He scorned the Inquisition, reactionary government and the oppressive Spanish church. One of his most famous *Caprichos*, on view at the Corcoran, is called "The sleep of reason produces monsters." Yet monsters of all sorts — men that have two heads, vultures large as oxen, demons, devils, giants — writhe in Goya's art.


Goya's self-portrait

The sweep of his emotions still takes the breath away. It is not just the briskness of his brush and the assurance of his line that make his late work seem so modern. It is his ability to show us all the fighting feelings in his conflicted heart.

Scholar Andrew Robison chose the splendid drawings in the National Gallery's exhibit. Together they suggest that Goya somehow skipped the 19th century. His early formal portraits are 18th-century pictures. His last works speak directly to the 20th-century soul.

Goya, like Velázquez, was a portraitist to royalty. Goya, like Picasso, another black-eyed master who liked to paint at night, was passionate, political, confessional, rebellious. All three of these great painters were Spanish to the core. Yet Goya was, at first, enormously attracted to the French.

He admired French enlightenment, French scholarship and liberty, the France of revolution, fraternity, equality, Voltaire and Rousseau. His native Spain, in contrast, seemed superstitious, backward, priest-ridden and slothful.

Goya also liked French elegance. One sees that in his early work. The marquesa de Pontejos, in the National Gallery's large portrait of 1786, wears Parisian ribbons on her dress. In their disdainful anticlericism, in their haughty superciliousness, the gibes in the *Caprichos* also feel part French.

Goya, though he worked at court, was no impassioned monarchist. In his portraits, at the National Gallery of the king and queen of Spain, King Charles IV looks pompous, Queen Maria Louisa ugly. You would think that he would flatter the royals who employed him. Instead, both of them look stupid. One can only wonder how Goya got away with it.

One drawing at the National Gallery, from Ian Woodner's collection, is the first one Goya made in which human beings wear masks. He always looked beyond the faces people wear.

He would not hide his sympathies. When he painted those he cared for — among them the unfortunate and lovely condesa Chincho'n — he did so with great poignancy. (He painted her as a child first. Later he portrayed her as the pregnant wife of Manuel Godoy, the prime minister of Spain — and the lover of the queen — whom the young condesa was forced to wed against her will. Both pictures are included in the National Gallery's exhibit.) When he portrayed those he hated — for instance the duke of San Carlos, with his drooping eyelids and half-open mouth — he would not conceal his scorn.

It is Goya's awesome honesty, his insistence that the truth be told, that gives his scenes of warfare their extraordinary timelessness.

Although he depicted torturings and rapes, massacres, dismemberments, famine and garrotings and stomach-churning scenes of corpses spitted upon trees, he looked beyond the uniform. Napoleon's soldiers in his pictures, even when they rape and kill, are never shown as mon-

Continued overleaf


Senora Sabasa Garcia


One of the "Caprices"

Under The Jolly Roger

By George MacDonald Fraser

CAPTAIN KIDD And the War Against the Pirates. By Robert C. Ritchie. Harvard University Press. 306pp. $20.

CAPTAIN KIDD was not much of a pirate; indeed, we have his own word for it that he was not a pirate at all, and if we are no more likely to believe him than the jury were, we can still feel some sympathy for him. He may have been, in the dour phrase of his native Scotland, none the worse of a hanging, but he was a desperately unlucky man. Chance, rather than his crimes, has placed his name first on the long black list of sea-robbers; alliteration may have had something to do with it, too, but the real reason for his enduring notoriety is that he was the scapegoat of circumstance, the right victim at the right time.

Like many another rascal, he was a clergyman's son, and went to sea in the high noon of buccaneering, when pillage and patriotism went hand in hand and the British, who have always been pirates at heart, were still honoring their great fillibusters. The arch-pirate Drake had been knighted a century earlier; in Kidd's young manhood the accolade was bestowed on Harry Morgan, whose Coast Brotherhood had savaged Spain in the Caribbean and, incidentally, served the cause of British expansion. And then, quite quickly, the picture changed: with Spain reduced, King William on the British throne, France again the chief rival, and the European powers competing ever more strongly in maritime trade, the buccaneers and privateers who had been so useful became something of an embarrassment. What was wanted now was peace and quiet in which commerce could flourish. In the new emerging political and economic order, piracy could have no place.

The pirates, who looked on expanding commerce from a different angle, naturally disagreed, none more so than the British in North America, where New York had done rather well out of sea-robbery. When the Caribbean ceased to be a happy hunting-ground, and the pirates began to shift their operations to Far Eastern waters, New York maintained strong links with the new robbers' roost in Madagascar, so convenient for plundering the rich argosies of the Indian Ocean. And it was in New York that *William Kidd, ex-privateer*, emerged from obscurity with a splendid idea — which he later claimed was someone else's. At this distance, through the web of intrigue that was spun around the project, not everything is clear, but roughly what happened was that Kidd and his associates induced (or were induced by) prominent noblemen of the Whig government in London to join in a venture to plunder *pirates* of the Indian Ocean. It was all legal (well, more or less) and Kidd certainly had a commission; the rewards were potentially enormous. So were the dangers, the principal one being that his targets were not merchantmen but the most dangerous ruffians then afloat.

In the event, Kidd, after a disappointing cruise, found himself with a mutinous crew on his hands (he once had to barricade himself in his cabin), and with investors to satisfy he turned pirate proper, his chief victim being an Indian argosy, the Quedah Merchant. It was Kidd's bad luck that not long before a vastly rich prize, the Mogul treasure ship, had been seized by the notorious Long Ben Avery; the uproar following these outrages was nowhere louder than in the British East India Company, whose trade relations with the Orient were jeopardized by such piracies committed by their fellow-countrymen.

Avery had got away with it; Kidd did not. At another time he might have made his peace at home, but the war against piracy was being stepped up, and his noble Whig backers were under mounting political attack from the Tories (and the East India Company) who seized eagerly on Kidd as a weapon in their campaign. Questions were asked in the House, a fine scandal seemed in prospect — it is not surprising that Kidd found himself abandoned. Arrested in Boston, he was shipped to England; when he came to trial, evidence on his behalf mysteriously disappeared, and his attempt to shift the blame on to his mutinous crew was unconvincing. In fact, he was guilty, not only of piracy but of killing his gunner, one Moore, whom he had hit on the head with a bucket during an altercation which Kidd claimed was mutinous. On both counts he was condemned, but his greatest offense seems to have been that he was dangerously inconvenient. So he was railroaded to Execution Dock, and into legend, protesting that "I am the innocentest person of them all, only I have been sworn against by perjured persons." When they hanged him the rope broke, and they had to hang him over again; nothing went right for poor Kidd.

Professor Ritchie has done two valuable things. By exhaustive research — his footnoted authorities occupy more than 50 pages out of 300 in the book — he has built up the most detailed record I have ever seen of a pirate voyage, with its origins and aftermath; I doubt if there is another like it. He has also placed it in its historic context, describing the political, and especially the economic events that shaped piracy in its age of transition; buccaneering tends to be thought of as a gaudy, romantic, *isolated* phenomenon, political only in its occasional association with national interest (as it was in the crippling of Spanish power), and it is good to be reminded that piracy, like everything else, was subject to market forces. Professor Ritchie puts it in a fresh light; something new (to me, at least) is his demonstration of what a casual, accepted thing it was in the brief interval between the end of semi-legitimate buccaneering, and the era of the professional sea criminals for respectable men to go a'roving leaving their everyday occupations to join a piratical venture, make their money, and then home again to wife and family. It is very much in the Anglo-American tradition, after all.

As a study of piracy, and the motives and forces behind it, *Captain Kidd* is a first-rate book and I hope he does more the same. His scholarship is sound; only once, on a tiny point, did he stop me short, with the observation that "The English government wanted to monopolize violence and refused to tolerate threats to law and order. Even the Highland Scots, long considered a reservoir of rebellion, were crushed after their uprising in 1745." The first sentence is true of every government, and the suppression of the clans was not because they were a threat to law and order, but because they were the cutting edge of the Stuarts against the Hanovarians. But that is a small point, and nothing to do with piracy, a subject on which Professor Ritchie is beyond challenge.

George MacDonald Fraser is the author of the Flashman novels and "The Pyrates," a buccaneering extravaganza soon to be screened by BBC Television.

On A Mission To Camelot

By Joanne Omang

COME AS YOU ARE. THE PEACE CORPS STORY. By Coates Redmon. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 416pp. $22.95.
MAKING A DIFFERENCE. THE PEACE CORPS AT TWENTY-FIVE. Edited by Milton Viorst. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 218 pp. $16.95.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago the first Peace Corps volunteers left President John F. Kennedy's Rose Garden for two years in Ghana. Rushed abroad for propaganda purposes even before Congress enacted the new agency into law, the 50 young college graduates were understandably anxious about being The First Volunteers.

They spent *their* 21-hour plane trip (it was 1961) practicing the Ghanian national anthem and the national dance called the "highlife." It paid off. Two of them subsequently won second prize in the nightclub dance contest in Accra.

That was the first return on the oddball notion that ordinary young Americans might do something other than make fools of themselves if sent overseas as cheap labor to help other nations' development projects. That the Peace Corps became a legend of self-sacrifice and youthful good works is still rather a mystery to the 120,000 Americans who followed the Ghana I group abroad to 92 other nations. Only they know how much and/or little was really accomplished, how the physical difficulties were the least of the problems, and how vastly much more they gained than they gave.

A growing literature on the Peace Corps is finally exploring those points, and thousands of returned Peace Corps volunteers gathered in Washington in September to observe the enabling legislation's silver anniversary and to talk about what, if anything, the Peace Corps means to them and to the nation right now.

It is a portentous milestone for what even some of the participants saw as a kind of idealistic lark for overprivileged kids, a program that many Americans vaguely think died with JFK. In some ways, as two new books make clear, the Peace Corps *has* remained stuck in the early 1960s.

Come as You Are; The Peace Corps Story, by Coates Redmon, is a delicious yarn and probably the definitive inside scoop of how the Peace Corps got going. The birth of the legend that sustains the agency to this day is less meticulously detailed than it was in Gerard Rice's fine study, *The Bold Experiment* published last year, but Redmon's account is much funnier and easier to digest.

She describes the early Peace Corps as a Rube Goldberg operation born of a "joyful, intellectually wanton, self-induced misinterpretation" and held together by sheer faith and the manic personal energy of R. Sargent Silver.

The agency was not Kennedy's idea, but that of Hubert H. Humphrey and General James M. Gavin. And, Redmon goes on, the idea itself was transformed by the accident of University of Michigan students hearing what they wanted to hear — "an invitation to join something exciting, new, and hopeful"; whereas Kennedy had issued a more general challenge to service during a 2 a.m. campaign appearance in Ann Arbor during October 1960. Lyndon B. Johnson then gave the Peace Corps notion a crucial push chiefly to irritate the Irish mafia around JFK, who thought the idea awful. Once approved, it barely escaped being swallowed into the Agency for International Development, and then tottered into action under a crew of wisecracking dreamers Shriver assembled in three frantic weeks in March 1961. The media image, painted by Shriver and spread uncriticized to an eager planet, soared free of any reality whatever.

Redmon quotes dozens of admiring victims of the Shriver treatment from that period. Donovan McClure, Shriver's public information officer, recalls that Shriver had a "buzz bomb" intercom system that summoned underlings with "the most revolting sound on earth," a noise elsewhere described as "a really terrifying death gurgle combined with a scream from the attic."

Outside the office, Shriver abandoned his terrified underlings to eagerly greet (as though he were campaigning for office) a lone Masai warrior in Tanganyika. He petted a courtyard lion in Ethiopia and then insisted everyone else do likewise.

"We were arrogant in a funny kind of way," summed up Bill Haddad, a journalist, who became Shriver's right hand for several years. "We were guys of the forties who thought there was nothing we, or America, couldn't do."

That attitude was pivotal to the Peace Corps' ethic. Redmon's account ends with Shriver's departure, and things have not been as exciting at the Peace Corps since, as another book timed for the silver anniversary makes clear.

Making a Difference, subtitled *The Peace Corps at 25*, edited by Milton Viorst, is an intermittently useful pastiche of essays on the past, present and future of the agency by those who were and are there at every level. A rather pious tone set by President Reagan's introduction and some of the initial essays is, fortunately, not sustained in the lively and evocative first-hand accounts and reminiscences, but no real organizing principle is evident in their arrangement.

AID administrator M. Peter McPherson, himself a former volunteer, argues that it is time to redefine the Peace Corps firmly as a development tool, and others make similar thought-provoking — if conflicting — suggestions.

Joanne Omang, a foreign policy reporter for The Washington Post, was a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey from 1964 to 1966.

Goya: Mystery And Mastery

Continued from page 16

strous, subhuman invaders. The Spanish peasants, the *guerillas*, who rose up to oppose them are just as clearly seen. Some are martyrs, some are heroes, some commit atrocities. All are human nonetheless.

A number of these etchings — they were not published while he lived — are on view at the National Gallery. More are at the Corcoran. Few pictures of our own age are more harrowing than these.

Goya, while a young man, while flattering and climbing, was quite willing to paint pretty things, sophisticated satires, the gold braid of a uniform, the glint of light on silk. But later in his life, imprisoned in his deafness, he turned to darker themes.

A violent, awful energy often, but not always, crackles in his late works. His most nightmarish pictures — the "Black Paintings," for example, which he painted with great fury directly on the walls of *Quinta del Sordo* (House of the Deaf Man), his isolated home outside of Madrid — resist interpretation. Equally enigmatic are *Los Disparates* ("The Follies" or "Absurdities"), which he began engraving in 1816 and made until his flight to France in 1824.

These prints are his most private, fantastic and unnerving. In some ways they restate the themes of the *Caprichos*, but with vastly greater power. One of the "Caprices," a savage yet amusing comment on the Spanish laws against divorce, shows a man and wife tied with ropes to one another. In the comparable "Absurdity" their flesh itself has fused, and each of their four feet faces in two directions; they're like monstrous Siamese twins.

His pictures of the bullfight in both museum shows are far more reportorial. Perhaps the charging bull, the admirable, astonishing valor of the matador, and the primal power of the exercise were together strong enough to tear his mind away from his private thoughts.

He began the La Tauromaquia series in 1815, while still at work on the "Disasters." The first etching in the set shows the prehistoric hunt that, so he believed, was the origin of the sport. Among the later prints are pictures that declare the artist a fan. One, at the National Gallery, is titled "The daring of Martincho in the ring at Saragossa."

Daring is not the word for it. Martincho decided to kill the bull without any of the usual protections. Its thick neck was not weakened by picks and banderillas, and Martincho did not deign to use a cape (instead he waved his hat), and he did not dance. In fact, he sat upon a chair in the middle of the ring with his feet bound by iron fetters. He tried the feat but once. That seems more than enough.

Another picture from the series, this one at the Corcoran, is called "Dreadful events in the first rows of the ring at Madrid and death for the Mayor of Torrejon." The bull has leaped into the audience. The artist who produced this print seems not at all alarmed.

Goya sought in life scenes that might compete with those that he imagined. One of the most moving drawings at the National Gallery was made in Bordeaux, during his final exile, in a lunatic asylum. It shows a *loco furioso*, a raging madman, with enormous hands and bulging eyes, confined behind bars. How bestial can a creature be, Goya asks us here — as he asks us often — and still remain a man?

Another drawing at the gallery will linger even longer in the viewer's memory. It, too, is from his last years. It shows an old, decrepit man, smiling with delight, swinging on a swing as if he were some oversweet young swain out of Fragonard or Watteau. Somewhere in all of Goya's art, despite its violence and its darkness — in the fervor of his brush, in his hunger for the seen — is an undertone of glee.

The National Gallery's exhibit will remain on view through January 4. The print show at the Corcoran, thoughtfully selected by Ed Nygren, who wrote its accompanying catalogue, will close January 25.

Of partridges and pear trees

By Ralph Whitlock

I WONDER whether I am unique in having once seen a partridge in a pear-tree! It happened at home on the farm when I was a boy. The pear-tree, once fan-trained but long neglected and now stretching out yawning arms in all directions, grew over our dairy.

One day a gusty wind caught by surprise a covey of partridges over a neighbouring meadow and hurled them across the farmyard. Never was there a more bewildered bird than the one which tangled with the pear-treee branches. It sat there for a full two minutes, giving us time to digest the phenomenon and remember it for all these years.

"On the first day of Christmas my true-love sent to me
A partridge in a pear-tree . . ."

"And what," asks a Canadian reader, "does it all mean?"

Not much.

A pedantic attempt to make sense of the partridge in the pear-tree suggests that the pear-tree was the mediaeval Roman Catholic Church and the partridge a heretical sect finally ensnared, but that sounds a bit far-fetched. No, this song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, was originally a forfeit song, and the less sense it made the better the chance of compelling a singer to pay a forfeit, which is what he had to do if he failed to remember any of the lines.

The gifts that the true-love brought were: —

Two turtle-doves on the second day;
Three French hens on the third day;
Four calling birds on the fourth day;
Five gold rings on the fifth day;
Six geese a-laying on the sixth day;
Seven swans a-swimming on the seventh day;
Eight maids a-milking on the eighth day;
Nine ladies dancing on the ninth day;
Ten lords a-leaping on the tenth day;
Eleven pipers piping on the eleventh day;
Twelve drummers drumming on the twelfth day.

The only logical sequence that can be detected as a help to the memory is that the first seen presents are birds, the last five people. The anomaly of the "five gold rings" is explained by the fact that early versions refer to "gold spinks", an old name for goldfinches. The general opinion is that the "calling birds", or "colley birds" according to some texts, are blackbirds.

The song is thought to have originated in France in the 12th century and to have been sung by travelling troubadours, to the music of a lyre. It was known in England in the 13th century and has been popular ever since, though it properly belongs to the twelve days after Christmas, not to the run-up to the festival. If forfeits are to be paid, it is generally possible to trip up the most resistant participants by requiring him to sing the song to speeded-up music, backwards.

Incidentally, the song has crossed the Atlantic, where native fauna have been substituted for the obscure European examples. Thus my Canadian correspondent may find himself singing about "deers a-running, wolves a-hunting, turkeys gobbling" and so on.

Far more serious and obscure is that other favourite at traditional Christmas parties, *The Dilly Song*. It lends itself to the same sort of treatment, being sung with great gusto at an ever-increasing rhythm and concluding with a wholesale collection of forfeits. As with *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, there are twelve lines, which are even more difficult to remember.

The version I know best starts with the line *"Green grow the rushes-O"*, which is also a kind of chorus. Then come the Twelve cryptic lines, thus:

1. "One is One and all alone and evermore shall be so."
2. "Two-two, the Lilywhite Boys, clothed all in green-O."
3. "Three-three, the Rivals."
4. "Four for the Gospel Makers."
5. "Five for the Symbol at your Door."
6. "Six for the Six Proud Walkers."
7. "Seven for the Seven Stars in the Sky."
8. "Eight for the April Rainers."
9. "Nine for the Nine Bright Shiners."
10. According to one version, this line is "From ten begin again-O". Another is "Ten for the Ten Commandments". However, there *are* lines for eleven and twelve.
11. "Eleven for the eleven that went to Heaven."
12. "Twelve for the Twelve Apostles."

The song clearly has a basis in religion, and those who think that the twelve numbers refer to Christianity can find much to support their belief. Nineteenth century chapel folk in Cornwall used, indeed, to sing the song as a hymn. "The Gospel Makers" seem clear enough; the "Eleven that went to Heaven" are the twelve apostles minus Judas; the "April Rainers" is supposed to be a corruption of the "archangels"; the two "Lilywhite Boys" are Christ and John the Baptist.

There are, however, other versions, including a very ancient Jewish one, antedating Christianity. And the title *"The Dilly Song"* comes from alternative versions for lines four and five, which run

"Four is the Dilly Hour when blooms the Dilly Flower,"

"Five it is the Dilly Bird that's seldom seen but heard."

Savants tend towards the opinion that the song could well be a mnemonic one belonging to a primitive religion way back in the Stone Age. It is futile, they say, to try to interpret the allusions. So let's throw our heads back and enjoy shouting it out, as ever!

Blonde bombshell trained for wai

By David Fairhall

DAWN HEWITT, aged 24, scarcely five feet tall with a blonde pigtail tucked under her hat, is one of the women of Greenham Common. She arrived with the American nuclear cruise missiles, but not to protest outside the barbed wire.

Her job as a launch-control officer in the USAF's 501st tactical missile wing is to train for something she hopes will never happen: the moment she gets orders to press the green button that would send her batch of 16 missiles on their way to the Soviet Union.

First-Lieutenant Hewitt volunteered after hearing about Nato's plan to deploy ground-launched cruise missiles in Britain while she was doing her degree in computer science, sponsored by the American air force. In the nuclear-launch business the Minuteman ballistic missile has more status than the humble cruise, but Dawn wanted to come to England. Her home town Boston, in Massachusetts, has strong English affiliations.

She said she had not spoken to those other women, a damp but stubborn remnant of whom still maintained their protest vigil outside the Berkshire base's main gate. A male colleague explained that they were under strict orders not to make any contact.

"I do my job," was the only explanation Dawn offered when asked how she coped with her awesome responsibility. She had no intention of publicly discussing her emotions, and wondered whether anyone would ever take her seriously again after all this attention from the press cameras.

Cruise crew: First-lieutenant Dawn Hewitt and her station commander at Greenham, Colonel John Bachs, with a cruise missile launcher. — Picture by Graham Turner.

Our visit was the first time since the cruise missiles arrived in November, 1983, that Greenham Common had opened its gates to let journalists and television cameras inside the perimeter fence but not the heavily guarded inner fence, which surrounds the six missile shelters and warhead bunkers.

Asked what the armed guards would do if intruders tried to break into this inner citadel, the station commander, Colonel John Bachs, said they would be removed with minimum force and handed over to the police.

Colonel Bachs, who was born in Hungary, said that guards accompanying the cruise-missile convoys on training dispersals to Salisbury Plain were not issued with ammunition. Nor were missiles carried on such outings.

His concern about demonstrations such as the recent ambush, when a launch vehicle was temporarily halted and splashed with white paint, was that there might be a serious accident.

If an operational convoy was called out on a real alert, "that would be a different ball game," a reference to the British Government's warning that protesters could be shot.

The route would be cleared and the 22-vehicle convoy protected by a 44-man force of which one third would be members of the RAF Regiment. Colonel Bachs said the presence of protesters outside the wire had if anything increased his men's determination to demonstrate their professional readiness. The station was now fully operational with 96 missiles.

The decision to open up Greenham Common was probably prompted by a public-relations assessment that secrecy was increasingly counterproductive, combined with the political judgment — shared by Mrs Thatcher and her Defence Secretary, Mr George Younger — that a positive pro-nuclear policy will win votes at the next general election provided arms control negotiations are seen to be prducing positive results.

The tour included a demonstration of the eight-wheel-drive cruise vehicle's remarkable cross-country performance and a look inside a launch-control centre. The two launch officers sit at identical consoles in air-conditioned comfort which would also protect them from nerve gas or nuclear fall-out.

First Lieutenant Mark Carter explained how his radioed orders would come down from the American president through the USAF and Nato chains of command.

With the orders would come weapons-release codes, some of which must be simultaneously punched into the computer by both launch officers, and targeting data that he would use but not understand.

Finally, a simple message would flash up on the screen in front of him "Recommend execute." If he was satisfied the computer knew what it was doing, he would follow that recommendation by pressing the small green button on the left of the console.

Money still oils wheels of Opec caravan

By John Hooper in Geneva

IT is not just water boards and television rental firms which have difficulty collecting their debts. Confidential documents prepared by Opec's Vienna-based secretariat show that, in this new era of low oil prices, getting money out of some of the members of the world's most powerful commodity cartel is like pulling a tooth.

According to the report, the Iraqis have ignored 26 reminders about their subscriptions for this year and the latter half of 1985. Libya has also been in arrears since the middle of last year, notching up a total of 24 taps on the shoulder.

None of which is a laughing matter for an organisation which, even before the start of what is already another lengthy meeting, had spent 45 days in conference, most of them in Europe's most expensive city. The report estimates that by the end of the year the secretariat alone will have spent more than £500,000 on Opec pow-wows — double the amount for which it had budgeted.

Earlier this year Opec's board of governors commissioned a study — appended to the secretariat's report — of the comparative cost of holding conferences in Vienna. It concluded that, largely because of the expense of transporting a large part of the secretariat half way across Europe and putting them up in a luxury hotel, Geneva meetings cost four times as much as if they were held at Opec's headquarters and almost three times as much as if they were held in a big Vienna hotel.

If that were not enough, the ministers arrived in Geneva to find a letter from the local police association which — with Christmas approaching — demand to know when the conference would end. The authorities described it as a "diplomatic blunder" and ordered a retraction. It was too late. On the first day of the conference ministers agreed that in future their first choice would be Vienna.

The decision will cost Geneva's shops and restaurants dear, to say nothing of the Intercontinental Hotel, where the meetings are held and where the bigger ministerial suites cost some £2,000 a night.

It ought to be pointed out, though, that Geneva did not come out top of the cost league. The report reveals the extent to which Opec was taken to the cleaners by the Yugoslavs when it met last summer in the Adriatic archipelago of Brioni. Six days in Brioni cost the secretariat more than nine days in Geneva a month later.

But Opec still cannot quite break itself of habits born in its heyday. At the last conference Opec officials gave away £3,146 in "gratuities for hotel staff". They also threw a party for the press at which the centrepiece was a gigantic chocolate confection in the form of an oil derrick.

The records show that within the space of three hours the journalists, together with those analysts, traders and other hangers-on who succeeded in wangling themselves a press pass, managed to set Opec back £3,824. Then they ate the chocolate oil rig.

The platform of the century

Terry Coleman visits the Musée d'Orsay

THE new French Museum of the 19th Century opened its doors to the Parisian public the other day with only four police riot vans hanging around outside, and only a handful of young men giving away leaflets saying that culture was being betrayed.

French protestors tend to be more literate than their English counterparts, so the abuse was well phrased. The Minister for Culture was a strangler — strangling, to be precise, 28 theatres, snuffing out music, starving the dance, cancelling orders for statues, and generally incompetent.

This was a let-down. For days Paris had been promised a little revolution. Students and others have smashed shops and burned cars. One student has been killed. The glorious days of 1968 have been recalled. The Left Bank has resounded to incessant police sirens. I have observed that the usual CRS convoy consists of 11 vans and one bus. So to see only four was, as I say, a let-down.

But the new museum at the Gare d'Orsay has been opened. It is what the Republic calls one of its great state projects for Paris, to enable the French better to understand the times in which they live.

It is a museum in a disused railway station, and a museum on a most magnificent site. It stands on the Left Bank, directly overlooking the Seine and the Tuileries Gardens, with the Louvre to the right as you look out. The Louvre is another project of state, and its courtyard is now being torn up to make way for a vast glass pyramid.

You could say the Musée d'Orsay had its first beginnings in revolution. During the Paris Commune of 1871 the Palais d'Orsay, which had stood on the site, was burned down. So, when the Orleans Railway Company wanted to build a station for the Universal Exhibition of 1900, there was a vacant lot. The station was designed to be a cross between a Roman temple and one of the great Roman baths, all done in the style of Art Nouveau. And though it was for electric trains — the height was no longer necessary to dissipate the smoke and steam of the engines — the Gare d'Orsay was given the high cast-iron arches of the classic railway cathedrals.

After 1939 the trains stopped. The place was used to house prisoners of war. Later Orson Welles filmed his version of Kafka's trial there. Then it was due to be pulled down, but three successive Presidents of the Republic — Pompidou, Giscard, and Mitterrand — saw that it was preserved to become instead a temple to the 19th century. Inside, there are 2,300 paintings, 1,500 pieces of sculpture, and about 1,500 other objects.

Though it was Pompidou's idea, they say Madame Giscard conceived the details in a dream.

It is magnificent, but it is strange. It is about the size of Marylebone station. Around the sides and on the upper levels are the paintings — familiar masterpieces everywhere. Manet's Dejeuner sur l'herbe, more Renoirs and Monets than you ever saw — but there is no point in a catalogue of names. Interesting though that when you see them in such quantity, and so relentlessly, it is Toulouse-Lautrec who is the fizziest. Then there is the lovely calmness of Bonnard.

It does occur to me that I ought not to condemn too hastily the celebrated novelists and members of the Academie Francaise who over the past few weeks have been writing exalted and meaningless rubbish in the newspapers, talking about the ceaseless interlocking of the circle and the square in the museum, and the sacred symbolism of the earth and sky, and so on.

Then there are the architectural plans and models. French architecture did not fail to bite as English architecture did in that period. And it was grand. A model of the new Paris Opera of 1875 shows the auditorium occupying not one tenth of the whole building. Then the furniture — and never, surely, was there a more degraded century. The hideous pieces are redeemed only by the bentwood chairs of the Thonet brothers, who in one year made 1.8 million in their five factories. But why so many examples? A fair proportion of this annual 1.8 million is on show, which is ironic since there is hardly a seat for the visitor to perch on throughout the whole of the vast museum.

The 19th century was a period of great invention and great works, but there is very little here to show it. My eye went to one painting of a train rounding a bend — but it was by Lionel Walden and called Les docks de Cardiff. The English eye goes to the Anglo-Saxon things. With hundreds to choose from, I found myself looking closely at a Sisley, and a portrait by the American Thomas Eakins, and at Whistler's Mother.

But as you enter the museum and walk as it were along the nave of the station, you see none of these things. You see, under the Art Nouveau decoration of the ironwork, the stark lines, pastel colours, and slabs of stone chosen for chic purposes by the Italian woman architect of the museum. And then, among all this austerity, a proper riot of sculpture.

Lots of Rodin, of course. He has been seen lately in London and nothing more needs to be said about him, except that his Gates of Hell is a wonder. But what I did not expect, and what quite dominates the central hall and for that matter a gallery or two, are the many figures of women either frolicking after a few drinks (generally called Bacchantes), or about to offer themselves to their lovers.

This is no doubt a longing fantasy, or a happy reality, for men of any kind, but no body of men can so diligently have pursued this image as the French sculptures of the mid-19th century. It doesn't matter whether the piece is described by the artist as a woman stung by a serpent, or as an illustration of a few lines of Andre Chenier, or whatever. What you have is a woman presenting abundant hips, arching her back, and letting her head fall back in abandon. There is also an Eve after the Fall, looking very worried.

Above all this is the great gilded clock of the station. All this promise presenting itself under the clock will stay in my mind. Very French. Very 19th century. Perhaps it takes an Anglo-Saxon to see it that way, and perhaps I have got it all wrong. I do, however, say in my defence that the largest canvas to be seen from the nave is entitled Romans in Decadence. And decadence is what France was in for much of the century.

The Musée d'Orsay takes its period as beginning in 1840 and ending in 1914. God save us. At first, France barely recovered from the Napoleonic Wars, then suffered the revolution in 1848, then the extravagances of the Second Empire, then the crushing defeat by Prussia in 1870, and then the Commune of 1871; then recovering itself only in order to prepare for the cataclysm of 1914. Not, all in all, the best of times. Not France's century.



In the Musée d'Orsay

Majesty in the kingdom of limbo

Michael Billington on a new King Lear

PRODUCTIONS of King Lear tend to fall into two groups: the timeless-mythic and the rigorously specific. Surprisingly, in view of his keen social instincts as a dramatist, David Hare's new version at the Olivier is one of the former.

Against a background of Hayden Griffin's chaste sheets unfurling like wind-bellied sails, it could be happening in any place at almost any time. The result is a production that lays the play out clearly before us and that boasts a fine Lear from Hopkins and one or two vintage supporting performances but that lacks the tang and spice of a strong directorial vision.

You can certainly see the influence of Peter Brook's legendary 1962 version in Mr Hare's determination to suspend moral judgment and not, for instance, to present Goneril and Regan from the outset as a pair of overt villains. But the production still begs many questions.

Are we in some pagan, pre-Christian world (the Lear of legend was supposed to have lived some seven centuries before Christ) where man is discovering for himself the need for patience, love and charity?

Or are we — as a suspended Adam and Eve statue momentarily implies — in a Christian world rancid with cruelty? We never really know. The consequence is a curiously abstract production that leaves several characters, most notably Lear's Fool, floating around in limbo with no definable social role.

My own hunch (based on Jonathan Miller's several versions and the Stratford production of ten years back with Sinden) is that Lear works best when given a precise domestic context. But though Hare's production is too self-effacing for my taste, it tells the story and clears a space for the actors, not least Anthony Hopkins's Lear. I would call his performance a victory on points over fifteen rounds rather than a knockout. But Mr Hopkins is always compelling to watch because he combines the strength and rage of a bull with an extraordinary capacity for pathos. He is a genuine heavyweight endowed with emotional finesse.

From the opening scene, when he divides up a kingdom composed of coloured children's blocks, he suggests a capacity for tyranny: the close-shaven white head is that of a Prussian Junker, a fist is forever bunched as he leads with his left. Yet, when Cordelia denies him the satisfaction of a declared love, he chokes back the tears. And Hopkins makes this a key moment in his performance.



Hopkins as Lear

He stops in his tracks when he finds himself later echoing the phrase "nothing will come of nothing" and when he talks of "our youngest born" the tears well up in his eyes and in ours. Hopkins conveys both Lear's brutishness and his emotional vulnerability.

Hazlitt said of Kean's Lear that "he chipped a bit off the character here and there". Hopkins gives us the whole man: barbarous and leonine when he threatens to tear at Goneril's "wolfish visage", tender and curious when he tests Gloucester's sightlessness by passing a hand over his eyes.

If I have any reservation it is that Hopkins cultivates a gravelly, aged voice that sometimes muffles meaning: it is significant how effective it is when he virtually steps out of character for "Take physic, Pomp". And the final scenes don't yet touch the very ecstasy of anguish and nerve-ends of feeling: I wish that "Howl, howl, howl" were given their virtually two-syllable Gielgudian music.

But, that aside, it is a stirring performance that combines lustihood, strength, anger with a sense of tears in mortal things. Hopkins has played Lear and won; and I suspect in six months time the performance will be even richer.

But Hare's production is no one-man show. I cannot recall a better Gloucester than Michael Bryant's: quiet, stoical, resigned and yet suggesting an anterior life of youthful promiscuity. Philip Locke's Kent, marching off at the end with what looks like a resolution to kill himself, is also the epitome of dignified service. It says a lot for Hare's that both actors are good enough to make you wonder what they would be like as Lear.

And both Anna Massey and Suzanne Bertish as Goneril and Regan follow the now-classic Brookian method of not signalling evil from the start but allowing it to develop through action. The former makes a selfish sexuality the key to her character: the latter has her father's rage without his compassion and, in one extraordinary sequence, bunches her fist at him as if about to offer blow for blow.

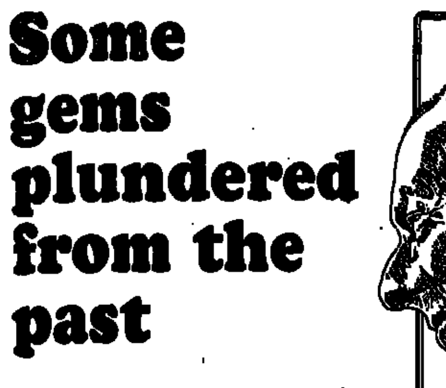
Some characters, however, are left marooned by Mr Hare's unspecified locale and by Christine Stromberg's periodless costumes. Roshan Seth is a fine actor but I cannot make out what his Fool is about: he seems neither a professional clown nor (like Antony Sher) Lear's alter ego and is often reduced to barking out his rebukes from upstage. What I miss is any hint of umbilical closeness between him and his master. Miranda Foster's Cordelia also doesn't do much between the lines (shouldn't she drink in every word of her father's?).

But there is a strong Albany from Ken Drury, a snickeringly youthful Edmund from Douglas Hodge, and a valiant Edgar from Bill Nighy in Shakespeare's most nearly unplayable role.

What you get at the Olivier is some powerful acting and some momentarily effective staging: Mr Hare's best directorial touch is the premonitory thunder-blast that follows Lear's reference to "the terrors of the earth".

But there are some puzzling inventions (such as a phalanx of wandering beggars to contextualise Poor Tom never seen again) and a sense that Mr Hare is telling the story without having worked out whether the play is set in a godless, pre-Christian society or a post-Christian one demonstrating man's inhumanity to man.

Some gems plundered from the past



Composers, conductors and performers in this year's list — from left: Britten, Haitink, Yansons, Sutherland, Tippett, Tchaikovsky, Gardiner and Perahia. Illustration by Peter Clarke.

The year's best records selected by Edward Greenfield

WHO would have expected that the brand-new medium of CD with its micro-chip technology would thrive so much on delving into classic recording of the past? I find, in summing up the year's issues — more than ever before — that the category yielding most plums is for CD reissues.

The freshness and brilliance of the young Joan Sutherland in her first big recital collection, The Art of the Prima Donna, comes out all the more vividly on CD (Decca), while Janet Baker, also at the beginning of her career, singing Elgar's Sea Pictures with Sir John Barbirolli conducting the LSO, has an intensity never captured in this music since (EMI).

So too on that same record (the original coupling preserved on CD) with the unique revelation of the 20-year-old Jacqueline du Pre playing the Elgar Cello Concerto, also with Barbirolli. The hushed dedication of that performance is all the more involving, when the new medium removes such blemishes as clicks and plops, which inevitably come to mar favourite LPs.

In the year that Sir Peter Pears died no finer memorial could have been devised than the CD reissue from Decca coupling all three of the orchestral song-cycles of Benjamin Britten, which he interpreted almost in the role of fellow-creator, the Serenade, the Nocturne, and Les Illuminations. CD with its extra time-length allows that coupling for the first time.

Britten also conducts for Classic versions of two Mozart Piano Concertos recorded with the ECO in the Maltings, K466 in D minor and K595 in B flat. Sir Clifford Curzon as soloist prevented them from appearing till after his death because he thought he might do better still in the B flat work, but they stand among his finest records, made the more beautiful on CD.

Outstanding among classic opera sets reissued on CD have been Sir Colin Davis's historic first recording of Berlioz's Les Troyens complete (Philips) and Wilhelm Furtwangler's radiant account of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde with Kirsten Flagstad, its mono recording amazingly fresh and well-balanced (EMI). The economy of having such epic operas on four discs instead of five or more brings positive musical benefits too.

Furtwangler's centenary was also celebrated with an LP issue of Mozart's Don Giovanni recorded live at Salzburg with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as Donna Elvira, idiosyncratically slow but compelling with it (EMI). Of other LP issues of archive material my favourite has been the collection of Sir William Walton's recordings of his own music taken from 78 discs, including the electrifying wartime first recording of Belshazzar's Feast (EMI).

Opera

This year has been more remarkable for rare operas than for important recordings of the central classics, but there were exceptions. Herbert von Karajan's version of Don Giovanni, idiosyncratic like Furtwangler's, dividing opinion sharply, is certainly memorable and commanding (DG), and so is the live recording made for Philips at Bayreuth of Wagner's Flying Dutchman, strongly conducted by Waldemar Nelsson.

Raymond Leppard's new version of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas for Philips flies boldly against current fashion, but with every reason when it brings so commanding an account of the title role from Jessye Norman opposite Thomas Allen.

Neatly straddling style problems is the electrifying account of Gluck's Iphigenie en Tauride recorded by John Eliot Gardiner for Philips with substantially the same cast as in his Lyon opera production but with Thomas Allen as Oreste, again making an outstanding contribution. This is set to recommend even to those — myself, I admit — who too often have found Gluck boring. The speed and sharpness here is irresistible.

Richard Hickox's splendid new version from EMI of Handel's Alcina with a cast including Arleen Auger, Della Jones and Kathleen Kuhlmann also benefits greatly from being recorded in conjunction with live performances. Outstanding among other authentic performances of opera is the Harmonia Mundi set of Cavalli's Serse directed by the counter-tenor, Rene Jacobs, also proving that liveliness can go with scholarship.

A first recording of Salieri's Falstaff, as a work no match for Verdi, let alone Mozartian comedy, was yet a fresh and lively offering from Hungaroton and its talented band of singers from the Budapest opera, while a rarity from a century later, Ernest Chausson's big-scale Wagnerian opera, Le roi Arthus, based on Arthurian legend, has been another agreeable surprise, beautifully done by French Radio forces under Armin Jordan with Teresa Zylis Gara, Gosta Winbergh and Gino Quilico leading the cast (Erato).

Modern opera has not been well served, but you could count Leonard Bernstein's Candide as a candidate, recorded in New York in a lively performance under John Mauceri, using the opera-house version of the piece he himself edited (New World).

The first CD version of Strauss's Die Frau ohne Schatten has been very welcome, the vintage 1977 performance live at the Vienna State Opera of the late Karl Bohm, with Leonie Rysanek, Walter Berry and Birgit Nilsson (DG). Stage cuts are observed, but on only three CDs it feels usual, maybe not the supreme masterpiece some Straussians claim, but endlessly fascinating.

Choral and vocal

Among multiple new issues of Bach's B minor Mass the one I have found most compelling, using small authentic forces but conveying the grandeur of inspiration as well as its incandescence, has been John Eliot Gardiner's with the Monteverdi Choir, a glowing performance (DG Archiv).

Christopher Hogwood, too, has been at his most inspired in choral music, a refreshing account of Handel's Athalia — one of his earliest English oratorios, based at a distance on Racine (Oiseau-Lyre). It adds to the point and dramatic strength of the set that alongside Emma Kirkby, a sparkling star in so many records of early music, you have not only the treble, Aled Jones, but Dame Joan Sutherland as the wicked Queen Athalia herself, rightly separated from the others in style and weight of voice.

Andre Previn with the RPO and Brighton Festival Chorus on the orchestra's own new label has done two outstanding discs of modern choral masterpieces by English composers. Superb as Previn's new version of Walton's Belshazzar's Feast is, crisper and brighter than his EMI recording, it is outshone by the new issue of Sir Michael Tippett's A Child of our Time, highly idiomatic and warmly expressive.

Among solo vocal records of the year I choose three of Lieder. Olaf Baer accompanied by Geoffrey Parsons makes an impressive first record for EMI, coupling Schumann's Dichterliebe with the Opus 39 Liederkreis. Beauty of voice goes with natural sensitivity, a feeling for words, but even Baer cannot quite match two of his older rivals, Peter Schreier and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, both doing the greatest of all song-cycles, Schubert's Winterreise, both on the Philips label.

Earlier in the year came Schreier's rapt expansive account in a live recording made with the veteran Soviet pianist, Sviatoslav Richter, so expansive it runs on to a second CD, which also contains Richter's inspired reading of the unfinished Reliquie Sonata of Schubert. Fischer-Dieskau in his latest version (I have lost count how many now) equally gains inspiration from the individuality of his accompanist, Alfred Brendel, and if anything the voice is now sweeter, roughening less, than it did on his 1972 DG version with Gerald Moore, also on CD.

My favourite Weber issue in that composer's bicentenary year has been an unpretentious collection from EMI, The Gallant Troubadour, of his British folk-song settings, virtually unknown till now. The American tenor Robert White, with chamber accompaniment couples ten of them with nine from Beethoven's rather better-known British folk-song settings, which in performances like these are far more like potboilers.

Orchestral

It is remarkable how many of the finest orchestral issues of the last few years have come from one of the smaller companies, Chandos, not just a question of superb engineering but a knack of finding the right conductors and orchestras. So it is this year with Mariss Yansons and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra winning my first choice in the latest of their Tchaikovsky symphony series, bringing vitality and magic to the often intractable Polish Symphony No. 3.

Neeme Jarvi's Prokofiev series for Chandos with the Scottish National Orchestra is equally successful. My favourite is the often under-prized Symphony No. 7, an unpretentious lyrical piece originally intended for children that finds Jaervi at his most inspired.

Scandinavian symphonies superbly done have included Vladimir Ashkenazy's colourful and committed account of Sibelius's First (Decca) part of a fine series, and Simon Rattle's strong and cohesive performance of Nielsen's Fourth, The Inextinguishable, with the City of Birmingham Orchestra (EMI), even more compelling than Esa-Pekka Salonen's new version for CBS.

Mahler symphonies have been coming in shoals, but the one I have enjoyed most has been Giuseppe Sinopoli's glowing and intense version with the Philharmonia, even more successful than the first in his Mahler series, of No. 5. And of Elgar issues (of which there have been many) I would choose Andre Previn's strong and expressive reading of the First Symphony with the RPO (Philips) ripely idiomatic to show his British pedigree.

Charles Dutoit, now starting a Stravinsky series with the Montreal Orchestra, outshines his rivals in the Firebird ballet not only in the beauty of the performance and the richness of sound but in having so generous and apt a coupling — two other early works, the Scherzo Fantastique and Fireworks (Decca).

Concertos

All seven of Beethoven's mature concertos have appeared in excellent versions this year, representing a wide variety of styles. The first two piano concertos come in inspired, spontaneous-sounding readings from the volatile Martha Argerich, sparking off Sinopoli and the Philharmonia Orchestra (DG), while Murray Perahia with Bernard Haitink and the Concertgebouw Orchestra give promise of a cycle that could well be unmatchable, in readings of No. 3 and 4 that are both strong and poetic, full of Perahia magic but not mannered (CBS).

Claudio Arrau, now in his eighties, with Sir Colin Davis and the Dresden Orchestra, seems to have lost all his old inhibition over recording in his vigorous account of the Emperor. It is not flawless in the passagework, but few will worry when there is such mastery.

The Beethoven Violin Concerto comes in an intimate, finely wrought and intense account from Jean-Jacques Kantorow and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, immaculately tuned (Denon), while in one of the outstanding bargain issues of the year the Triple Concerto receives the finest performance among current versions from a team of soloists led (as in this work they should be) by the cellist, Robert Cohen, with Jukka-Pekka Sarraste and the ECO (Classics for Pleasure).

Winning records of clarinet concertos have come from Thea King in the Mozart (with Jeffrey Tate and the ECO) excellently coupled with the Clarinet Quintet (Hyperion), while Emma Johnson is the sparkling soloist in a charming collection of concertante works including her party-piece, the Crusell Concerto No. 2 (ASV).

Chamber and instrumental

Thea King's Hyperion record of Mozart comes in this category too with the Clarinet Quintet. Other excellent Hyperion issues of the year include the young group, Domus, in warm, sensitive readings of the two Faure Piano Quartets.

The ideal coupling of Elgar's Quartet and Piano Quintet comes from the Chilingirian Quartet joined by Bernard Roberts, warmly understanding performances marked by superb ensemble (EMI). Also from EMI is a box of the complete quartet music from Benjamin Britten beautifully played by the Endellion Quartet including several first recordings of early works and with Douglas Boyd as soloist in the Phantasy for Oboe and String Trio.

Outstanding among piano records this year has been the collaboration of Murray Perahia and Radu Lupu in two masterpieces for duet, the F minor Fantasy of Schubert and the D major Sonata of Mozart, K448, master pianists challenging and responding to each other in rapt concentration (CBS). As a purveyor of keyboard fireworks Vladimir Horowitz is still supreme, and the live recording of his Moscow recital last March is a winner in its naughty flaring.

Contemporary

Luciano Berio's Sinfonia has come from Pierre Boulez and the French National Orchestra in the first recording of the full five-movement version (Erato), while Esa-Pekka Salonen drew a masterly performance of Lutoslawski's Symphony No. 3 and Les espaces du sommeil from the Los Angeles Philharmonic (CBS). But note that the composer's own version of both works is due from Philips.

Soccer results

TODAY LEAGUE — FIRST DIVISION: Arsenal 3, Luton 0; Charlton 0, Liverpool 0; Chelsea 0, Tottenham 2; Everton 3, Wimbledon 0; Manchester United 2, Leicester 0; Nottingham Forest 0, ...mpton 0, Oxford United 2, Aston Villa 2; ... QPR 1. Friday: Watford 1, Norwich 1. ...ntry 2, Manchester City 2; Sheffield ... Newcastle 0. Leading positions: 1, ...: 2, Nottingham Forest 20, 36; ... Huddersfield 1, Crystal ... Barnsley 1. Friday: ... 1; Ipswich 3, ... 2. Sunday: ... Grimsby 0; ...ted 2; ...

The Spanish captain's story

Carlos Fuentes on the Machiavellian New Man who conquered the New World

LETTERS translated and edited by Anthony Pagden, with an introduction by J. H. Elliott (Yale, cloth £27.50).

HERNAN CORTES, the conqueror of Mexico, was seven years old when Columbus set foot in the New World. He came from a modest family in a modest town of barren Extremadura. At nineteen, he left home for the Indies. His Spanish inheritance was a vine and a beehive. In the New World, he conquered an empire nine times the size of Spain.

The letters sent by Cortes to Emperor Charles V between 1519 and 1526, in Anthony Pagden's definitive translation, tell the tale of this conquest with self-serving vigour, a dash of mythologising, and a subtle sense of legitimation. It all adds up to one of the most fascinating Machiavellian documents to come out of the Renaissance.

Machiavelli wrote The Prince in 1513, but it was only published after his death, in 1532. Cortes could not have read Machiavelli. But, as these letters prove, he was the best living proof that the Machiavellian idea was in the air of the sixteenth century.

A product of the enormous energy and movement of the Spanish war of Reconquest against the Moors, Cortes and his brethren represented the new men of an incipient middle class first liberated from feudalism by the shifting frontiers of the wars, the Christian repopulation of reconquered zones, and the rise of cities and towns rewarded with a modicum of municipal freedoms.

These events then prepared them to rise from anonymity to the challenge of the Renaissance enterprise of power as envisioned by Machiavelli. Power is truly deserved by those who by their courage and ability, and not by fortune or inheritance, are able to conquer it. Now everyone, if they know how to manipulate will and fortune, can be the Prince, instead of serving him.

Re-reading Pagden's translation, I am again struck by the democratic essence of Machiavellianism as acted out by men such as Cortes in the New World. Cortes writes to the King in order to put his conquests at the royal feet, but at the same time he is telling an extraordinary tale of how to acquire power in unprecedented, uncharted circumstances.

Akin to the models offered by Machiavelli, "little or nothing" in the life and enterprises of Cortes "can be attributed to fortune". As Machiavelli says of Agathocles, who rose to be king of Sicily, Cortes also ". . . achieved sovereignty, not by the favour of any one (but) by a thousand efforts and dangers," and he maintained it "with great courage and a great temerity".

Cortes came to Mexico, furthermore, as a "prophet armed". The Indians could hardly resist musket, cannon, and monstrous four-legged beasts. Even less could a culture based upon myth resist an invader who arrived in precise synchronisation with the announced return of the blond, bearded god Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent.

But Cortes did not know that he was, nor did he want to be, a prophet, much less a God. He wished to be what his ancestors could never have been: a prince, at least an *hidalgo*. To do this, he had to fight on three fronts: against the governor of Cuba, Velazquez, who had denied him the right to conquer and settle; against Montezuma, the Aztec emperor, who held sway over a vast and ominous land and its powerful armies; and against his own king, Charles V, who should be made to feel that these conquests were made in his name so that he would not hinder, but legitimise, Cortes's faraway actions in the New World.

Cortes defeated the authority of the governor of Cuba, by achieving success in Mexico — a highly improbably forecast when the Spanish captain destroyed his own ships in Veracruz and thus cut off his own retreat. The defeat of the Aztecs happened because Cortes employed to the hilt the combination of courage, audacity, and ability that Machiavelli called *virtu:* this prince of the New World intrigues, listens, and listens above all to the very human complaints of the tribes oppressed by Montezuma.

The Spanish captain united them all in what proved to be an invincible alliance against the Indian despot: the conquest of Mexico was more than the astonishing success of an army of less than 600 Europeans who cut off their retreat and confronted a theocr[atic] empire. It was the victory of [the] other Indians, who assisted C[orte]s, against the Aztec overlord. [It w]as the victory of the Indian [Wo]rld against itself.

Cortes defeated Montez[uma be]cause the Aztec emperor [wan]ted to see in the Spanish capt[ain] a God, whereas Cortes refused [to b]e a God and decided to be a m[an, a]nd more than a man, a Renais[sanc]e Prince. But this was not to [be a]llowed by the Spanish Crown; Cortes defeats Montezuma, but then he is defeated by Charles V, as John H. Elliott explains in his luminous preface to the present edition.

Cortes is the Prince who never was: this tale of melancholy courage is the stuff of the Letters. It is vastly relevant to the contemporary history of Latin America: Army, Church and State are our oldest institutions and here we witness their origin. Cortes, the military man, wished to legitimise his conquest by Christian evangelisation of the heathen and then offer it, *pro forma*, to a faraway sovereign, while proceeding to consolidate his own local power in Mexico.

The Church and the Crown were not going to permit this. Once the military phase of the conquest had been concluded, Cortes was named governor, then surrounded by a cloud of intriguing royal bureaucrats, finally shunted aside, accused of sundry crimes, and left to write pathetic letters to the King, asking for money to pay his sailors, while propagandising priests such as Las Casas furthered royal authority and further undermined the power of the conquistadores.

Two dates coincide here: The fall of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital, to Cortes, in 1521, and, that same year, the defeat of the revolution of the Castilian communities at the hands of Charles V. Thinking that he has triumphed in the New World, the conquistador has just been defeated in the Old World. He wanted to be a prince in the Indies because he had never been an *hidalgo* in Spain. He should have been a citizen first, both in the Old and in the New World.

His failure became ours. The vertical autocracy of Montezuma was substituted by the vertical autocracy of the Spanish Habsburgs. We are the defendants of both verticalities, and our stubborn struggles for democracy are all the more difficult, and perhaps even admirable.

Machiavelli's Prince was first published in Spanish translation in 1552 and then included in the *Index Prohibitorum* by Cardinal Gaspar de Quiroga in 1584. But first, the Crown had ordered, in March of 1527, that there should be no further printings of the letters of Cortes. And in 1553, yet another royal decree was to forbid the export to the Indies of all histories of the Conquest. We were not allowed to know ourselves, so instead of histories we write novels.

Chroniclers such as Cortes, were *not only our first historians* but our first novelists. Out of their epic contradictions, new communities and finally new nations were born. Yet in Mexico there is no statue honouring Cortes: we have preferred to celebrate the defeated, forgetting that Cortes can be counted among them.



Cortes with his coat of arms as Marques del Valle de Aoxaca.

Gamesperson's ploy

Richard Boston on Potterism and Ewarting

THE COMPLETE UPMANSHIP by Stephen Potter (Grafton, £6.95). THE COMPLETE LITTLE ONES, by Gavin Ewart (Hutchinson, £6.95).

THERE wasn't much to laugh about in 1947. Food was strictly rationed. The winter was exceptionally cold, and there were frequent power cuts (double glazing was unknown in those days and, though radiators existed, they were seldom known to give out heat).

The above sentences will be recognised by Games-persons as a ploy (or gambit) intended to make readers under the age of 40 feel One Down. While purporting to convey straightforward information, what they are actually saying is that we over-40s had a hellish time and came through it with our upper lips stiff, while you young whipper-snappers are a molly-coddled lot who never stop complaining.

As I was saying, there wasn't much to laugh about in 1947, but that was the year in which S. Potter's Gamesmanship was published, to be followed over the next decade by *Lifemanship, One-Upmanship,* and Supermanship.

All four are now available in one indispensable paperback, marred only by a cover illustration which is not only exceptionally ugly but totally out of key with the contents of the book. To a lesser extent the same is true of Ralph Steadman's cover for the Gavin Ewart book, but we'll come to that later.

S. Potter did not invent Gamesmanship. He discovered it. He was playing tennis at the time, partnering C. Joad against younger and far better players. Having returned a sizzling service into the side-netting, Joad said to his opponent in an even tone: "Kindly say clearly, please, whether the ball was in or out."

The very slight suggestion that their sportsmanship might just possibly be in question had the desired effect of unsettling the young opponents to such an extent that they lost the match. How crude, by comparison, are the tantrums of J. McEnroe.

For the founder of the LCC (Lifemanship Correspondence College) Joad's u[tteran]ce had a catalytic (I sugge[st in 1]986 this is OK wo[r]d) effect once more [compare wit]h that of the falling apple on N[ew]ton, the boiling kettle on Wa[tt] and mouldy ch[ee]se on Fleming.

The [pi]oneering work [w]as Games[m]anship, [or the] Art of Winning Games Without Actual Cheating. This is still the standard work on the subject and probably always will be. If it has a fault (which it does not) it is (or would be) that it tends to concentrate too much on games as games per se and no[t] as what they in fact are, which is, of course, an extension of life.

S. Potter had spotted that games are (how shall I put it?) an extension of life. At the same time (or very nearly the same time) he grasped the all-important principle that life is an extension of games. And students must remind themselves that Potter was working many years before his ideas were taken up so ponderously by the US shrink E. Berne, in Games People Play.

There are large sections of the English population in which the main aim in life is to make other people feel slightly uneasy. At the same time they seek to put themselves what is technically known as One Up. One of Potter's many insights was that in putting yourself One Up when against an expert or a professional (such as, for example, your GP) ignorance is no handicap. At worst it is like playing with the black pieces at chess. Some simple plonking ploy soon redress the balance.

One[']s take one at random. Someone [t]alking at inordinate length about [a] country which he appears to know absolutely everything about, remember[s] yo[u] can never What are [wh]ich continent it's in. solution is [t]o do? The Lifeman's waits for a p[ause] and deadly. He then says thou[gh] in the f[l]ow and the South". Th[is f]ally, "Except in known to fail. [...] never b[e]en

One of the deligh[ts] of reading these texts (still a[n] O[K] word, I think, but only just) is [re]newing acquaintance with such great exponents of Lifemanship as Cogg-Willoughby, Gattling-Fenn, Ivy Spring and Odereida.

And G. Wert, "a well-known and even liked" member of the LCC staff who disappeared (reward £8, but allow for inflation). G. Wert. It is conceivable that after disappearing he changed his name slightly? G. Ewart? Our inquiries into this subject have hardly begun.

Meanwhile we must content ourselves with this slim volume of G. Ewart's complete shorter poems. It is tremendously entertaining, funny, erotic, playful and also with a rich vein of anger on such subjects as apartheid, Saatchi and Saatchi and the "fake lady bossyboots from Grantham". Gavin Ewart is the Unofficial Poet Laureate, and he's doing a great job.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD, England.

CRICKET

A breezy victory

ENGLAND survived the gales of Hobart to bowl out Tasmania for 167, winning the game by an innings and 96 runs in two days of actual playing time.

In conditions that one onlooker likened to the north face of the Eiger, the England bowlers soon found the flaws in Tasmania's patchy batting in the kind of win that old-time touring teams used to have in state games.

Meanwhile the form of Ian Botham, chosen for Thursday's one-day game against the Prime Minister's XI in Canberra, remains a source of some concern.

He had an hour-long net at the weekend, but felt just enough pain from his injury while batting to prevent his stepping up the pace of his bowling as planned.

But after Canberra he is expected to play at Melbourne, unless he breaks down in the meantime.

Botham's form will have a bearing on the immediate future of DeFreitas, whose inexperience was shown up at Adelaide, and who may be dropped if it becomes clear that Botham will not play a significant role in the next test. Foster is now his main challenger.

Most of the donkey-work at Hobart was done by Gatting.

Lester Piggott bailed for £1m on tax evasion charges

By David Pallister

LESTER PIGGOTT, the retired champion jockey, was arrested by police last week, charged with trying to defraud the Inland Revenue of hundreds of thousands of pounds.

After several hours in custody, he was released on bail after signing over the deeds to his Newmarket home and stables, valued at £950,000. Magistrates at Newmarket originally asked for £1 million to be deposited with the court, but Mr Piggott's solicitor was unable to produce a bank draft in time. Other conditions of bail included two £100,000 sureties, weekly reporting to police, and the surrender of his passport.

At a special court at Newmarket, where he lives, Mr Piggott, aged 51, was charged that "on or about April 29, 1983, at Newmarket in Suffolk, or elsewhere," he did, "with intent to defraud and to the prejudice of Her Majesty the Queen and the Commissioners of the Inland Revenue, deliver or cause to be delivered to the Inland Revenue special office, a statement signed by him and dated April 29, 1983, which contained a false statement — namely that the only bank accounts he held on that date were at the National Westminister Bank in Newmarket."



Lester Piggott — 38-year career

After an adjournment the magistrates' chairman, Mr John Moore, a former bookmaker, set the £1 million condition and a deadline of 6pm. Mr Piggott remained in police cells while efforts were made to find the money. One of the sureties was the millionaire racehorse owner Charles St George, who was contacted by telephone in London.

The case is not expected to be heard for at least three months.

Mr Piggott left the court at 8.30pm without saying anything and was driven back to his home. In a written statement he said: "I was very disappointed to be arrested today as since February 1, 1986, my advisers and myself had spent thousands of hours getting together all the evidence that was sought by the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise with a view to settling my affairs.

"This evidence was made available to the authorities and it would seem now to be used against me next year. I would like to thank the two friends that stood bail for me at such short notice."

In a 38-year career Lester Piggott was 11 times champion and rode 4,348 winners in England. His record of nine Derby victories and 29 classic successes, won him millions of friends, and a few enemies too.

Last year he hung up his boots and began the new life of a trainer at Newmarket. His first season was a great success, with 33 winners at home and abroad.

Soccer results

TODAY LEAGUE — FIRST DIVISION: Arsenal 3, Luton 0; Charlton 0, Liverpool 0, Chelsea 0, Tottenham 2; Everton 3, Wimbledon 0; Manchester United 2, Leicester 0; Nottingham Forest 0, Southampton 0; Oxford United 2, Aston Villa 2; West Ham 1, QPR 1. *Friday:* Watford 1, Norwich 1. *Sunday:* Coventry 2, Manchester City 2; Sheffield Wednesday 2, Newcastle 0. Leading positions: 1, Arsenal (P 20, Pts 41); 2, Nottingham Forest 20, 36, 3, Liverpool 20, 35.

SECOND DIVISION: Huddersfield 1, Crystal Palace 2; Portsmouth 2, Barnsley 1. *Friday:* Birmingham 2, Sheffield United 1; Ipswich 3, Plymouth 0; West Brom 1, Reading 2. *Sunday:* Brighton 3, Shrewsbury 0; Derby 4, Grimsby 0. Oldham 2, Bradford 1; Stoke City 7, Leeds United 2; Sunderland 3, Blackburn 0. Postponed: Hull v Millwall. Leading positions: 1, Oldham 19, 40; 2, Portsmouth 20, 39; 3, Derby County 20, 37.

THIRD DIVISION: Bournemouth v Blackpool postponed; Bristol City 4, Bolton 1; Bury 4, Walsall 0; Newport 1, Rotherham 2; York 1, Fulham 1. *Friday:* Chesterfield 1, Darlington 3, Port Vale 2, Gillingham 4, Bristol Rovers 1. *Sunday:* Brentford 0, Middlesbrough 1; Carlisle 0, Notts County 2. Doncaster 2, Swindon 2; Mansfield 1, Wigan 5. Leading positions: 1, Middlesbrough 20, 41; 2, Gillingham 20, 40; 3, Notts County 20, 37.

FOURTH DIVISION: Aldershot 1, Crewe 0; Cambridge United 3, Rochdale 0, Preston 1, Orient 0; Swansea 1, Colchester 2; Torquay v Peterborough postponed; Wolverhampton 1, Southend 2. *Friday:* Burnley 1, Cardiff 3; Halifax 2, Hereford 1; Scunthorpe 3, Exeter 1; Stockport 2, Wrexham 1. *Sunday:* Northampton 3, Lincoln 1. Leading positions: 1, Northampton 20, 51; 2, Southend 19, 37; 3, Swansea 20, 35.

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — PREMIER DIVISION: Celtic 1, Aberdeen 1; Dundee United 3, Hearts 1; Falkirk v Dundee postponed; Hamilton 0, Rangers 2; Hibernian 0, Motherwell 1; St Mirren 3, Clydebank 1. Leading positions: 1, Celtic 25, 40; 2, Dundee United 25, 36; 3, Rangers 24, 34.

FIRST DIVISION: Brechin 1, Morton 3; Dumbarton 0, Forfar 1; Dunfermline v Clyde postponed; East Fife 0, Airdrie 0, Kilmarnock 1, Montrose 0; Partick v Queen of South postponed. Leading positions: 1, Dunfermline 24, 33, 2, Dumbarton 25, 30; 3, Morton 25, 29.

SECOND DIVISION: Albion v Stirling; Alloa v Stranraer; Cowdenbeath v Berwick postponed. Arbroath 2, Raith 1; Meadowbank 2, Ayr 2; Queen's Park 2, East Stirling 1; St Johnstone 1, Stenhousemuir 0. Leading position: 1, Raith 20, 28; 2, Meadowbank 19, 25; 3, St Johnstone 20, 24

Arsenal show the pack a clean pair of heels

IT COULD be the kiss of death to say so, but there is an air of inevitability about the championship form of Arsenal at the moment at the top of English soccer's First Division. Others may huff and puff and worry about injuries, including the champions, Liverpool, but Arsenal remain calm and assured, thanks to consistency both of style and team members.

They entered the Christmas and New Year batch of games with a buffer of five points between themselves and the second club, Nottingham Forest, with Liverpool and city neighbours Everton sharing 35 points a further point adrift. This is after 20 games, which is roughly half the League programme and is a handsome lead by anyone's reckoning. At the weekend Arsenal looked scrappy at home to Luton Town for three-quarters of the game, anxious to please but unable to convert their mastery into goals. But from the moment Quinn put them ahead after 71 minutes the other two goals came as if by right from a side oozing confidence.

Their manager, George Graham, quite properly still refuses to talk in terms of winning the championship, well aware of the salutary example of Manchester United's failure from an even more promising position last season. But he allowed himself a cautious: "We are very pleased with what we have been doing recently."

Liverpool, meanwhile, did themselves no favours by only drawing 0-0 at Charlton Athletic, in spite of Charlton being reduced to 10 men for most of the second half. The champions are still looking to field a settled side, thanks to injuries and sickness.

Everton have had more than their fair shares of those problems this season, but at the weekend welcomed back their midfield general, Peter Reid, who has played such a major part in the team's success in recent years. He has not played a first team match since beginning treatment for injuries after the World Cup in Mexico during the summer, and even at the weekend he was quietly given his first taste of serious action only as substitute, and that only when Everton were 3-0 ahead against Wimbledon.

Nottingham Forest, meanwhile, failed for the first time this season to score at home in sharing a goalless match with Southampton. It was for Southampton a relief from the strife that has inflicted the club recently, with one player being hauled before the Football Association for allegedly bringing the game into disrepute, their England goalkeeper, Shilton, suffering a very public tiff with his wife that included the involvement of the police, although it all ended peacefully, and another player firing in a transfer request. Shilton's problems were compounded at Forest where he broke his nose in a collison.

Soccer's worries over hooligan supporters took on a new perspective last week when the non-League club, Telford United, and Leeds United, of the Second Division, were ordered to play their FA Cup third round tie at West Bromwich Albion's ground. This all arose from a decision of the police at Telford, who had won home advantage in the cup draw, that they would not be able to control the yobbo element that follows Leeds around, bringing enormous discredit to the club over the years. Twice this season these hooligans have started fires at away grounds, including at West Bromwich, who were naturally reluctant to stage the cup-tie. But faced with the police fears the FA opted to order the match at West Bromwich's ground, which is fairly close to Telford, at least aware that the police there have the numbers and experience to tackle the hooligans.

The weekend's highest gate, meanwhile, was at Glasgow Celtic, in the Scottish Premier Division, where 35,624 people contrived to avoid the last shopping Saturday before Christmas to see the 1-1 draw with Aberdeen. It cut into Celtic's lead in the division but still left them with 40 points, four clear of Dundee United, who survived a fright at home against Hearts, when they recovered from being a goal down at half-time to win 3-1. Victory would have put Hearts into second place. Defeat means that they stay in fifth place behind Glasgow Rangers and Aberdeen.

Wigan win through

WIGAN, holders of Rugby League's John Player Trophy, won through to the final again at the weekend by beating Hull 11-10 in the first of the semifinals. In the final they will meet Warrington or Widnes. Hull had looked like providing an upset throughout the first half thanks to some ferocious tackling and led 5-0 at the interval. But the second half belonged to Wigan's young scrum-half, Edwards, and even more dramatically the try-scoring instincts of stand-off Ellery Hanley. His first try was from a solo 30-yards run that left defenders in his wake; the second followed a drive by Edwards that ended in Hanley going over in a corner.

Another sample of the high quality of Australian Rugby League was experienced in England at the weekend. Only weeks after the Australian seniors inflicted a clean sweep of the Test series against Great Britain, their touring Under-19 squad won their series against Britain 2-0. They took the second match at Leeds 26-14, scoring four tries and showing vastly superior skills and power, although the British youngsters did not lack in spirit.

Alan Dunn's DIARY

The crippling cost of bringing sports grounds up to the new safety standards following last season's soccer tragedies has hit at least one leading Rugby League club hard. Hull Kingston Rovers, twice champions in the past three years, have already paid one bill of £108,000 and face another of £145,000 at their ground. The annual meeting last week heard that the club may have to sell the ground to clear debts of £500,000, with losses continuing at £150,000 a year.

Concern over foreigners

RUGBY UNION in England completed at the weekend the series for the divisional championship, with North retaining the title but everyone seemingly dissatisfied with a format that was intended partly to aid the selection process for the national team. North completed three wins wins by beating London 34-6, while South-west joined Midland and London on two points after losing 18-10 at the Midlands. Too many of the games in the series were devalued, however, by the lack of cooperation by some clubs and a generally negative and unimaginative approach in the games.

Meanwhile French Rugby Union administrators have expressed concern over the number of foreign players taking part in the top division of the French club championship. There are 33 South Africans and 18 New Zealanders among the 83 foreigners playing in the championship's 80 clubs. There are fears that some may be mercenaries and that they could limit the development of local talent. Attempts may be made to limit clubs to one overseas player, or to make residence in France for at least a year a qualification for playing.

Sponsors withdraw from racing

MOTOR SPORT suffered a major financial setback at the weekend when Imperial Tobacco ended their 18-year sponsorship of the John Player Special Lotus team. Imperial's chief executive, John Bloxridge, said that the enormous costs of grand prix sponsorship could not be justified. Imperial have been putting in about £3 million a year, but more was said to be demanded for next year, when Ayrton Senna will have a Japanese, Satoru Nakajima, as his second driver. Imperial were unhappy at that decision, wanting a British driver.

There are, however, always those who are willing to take on the challenges of grand prix racing. Gerard Larrousse, the former Renault and Ligier Formula-One team director, announced a new team last week for next season. They will use a Lola chassis fitted with the new 3.5 litre non-turbo-charged Cosworth DFZ V8 engine. Philippe Alliot will drive the first car in its debut in the San Marino Grand Prix, and a second car may run later.

The sport lost one of its key figures last week when Jean Marie Balestre retired after eight years as president of the ruling International Federation of Automobile Sports. He said that he was going because of a "lying and defamatory" campaign against him. FISA are facing a £3 million lawsuit brought by Peugeot over the decision to ban the current Group B cars from world championship rallying next season.

As anticipated Juha Kankkunen was named world rally champion last week when FISA ruled the San Remo rally in October null and void. It had been won by Markku Alen, who believed that he had become world champion when he went on to take the last event, the Olympus in Washington, but was thwarted by the FISA decision.

Boxer cleared of drug-taking

BOXING'S Tim Witherspoon was cleared last weekend of allegations that he had been taking drugs before he lost his world heavyweight title to James "Bonecrusher" Smith last week. Jose Torres, chairman of the New York State Athletic Commission, said that there had been a clerical error in an earlier announcement that tests on Witherspoon had allegedly proved positive for marijuana. "Someone made a critical error in putting 'positive' when it should have been 'negative,'" said Torres.

Casualty on the slopes

SKIING's World Cup champion, Marc Girardelli, became the second major casualty of the season when he dislocated his left shoulder in a fall in Yugoslavia. It was the second time he had dislocated the shoulder in three weeks and he immediately went to Switzerland for an operation. He hopes to be fit by the end of January. Last week the American, Bill Johnson, was badly injured in a downhill training fall.

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